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TALES OF OLD JAPAN.

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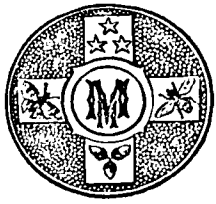

THE RONINS INVITE KŌTSUKÉ NO SUKÉ TO PERFORM HARA-KIRI.

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TALES OF OLD JAPAN.

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BY

A. B. MITFORD,

SECOND SECRETARY TO THE BRITISH LEGATION IN JAPAN.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS,

DRAWN AND CUT ON WOOD BY JAPANESE ARTISTS.

Kx-m. 528

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PREFACE.

In the Introduction to the story of the Forty-seven Rônins, I have said almost as much as is needful by way of preface to my stories.

Those of my readers who are most capable of pointing out the many shortcomings and faults of my work, will also be the most indulgent towards me; for any one who has been in Japan, and studied Japanese, knows the great difficulties by which the learner is beset.

For the illustrations, at least, I feel that I need make no apology. Drawn, in the first instance, by one Ôdaké, an artist in my employ, they were cut on wood by a famous wood-engraver at Yedo, and are therefore genuine specimens of Japanese art. Messrs. Dalziel, on examining the wood blocks, pointed out to me, as an interesting fact, that the lines are cut with the grain of the wood, after the manner of Albert Dürer and some

of the old German masters,—a process which has been abandoned by modern European wood-engravers.

It will be noticed that very little allusion is made in these Tales to the Emperor and his Court. Although I searched diligently, I was able to find no story in which they played a conspicuous part.

Another class to which no allusion is made is that of the Gôshi. The Gôshi are a kind of yeomen, or bonnet-lairds, as they would be called over the border, living on their own land, and owning no allegiance to any feudal lord. Their rank is inferior to that of the Samurai, or men of the military class, between whom and the peasantry they hold a middle place. Like the Samurai, they wear two swords, and are in many cases prosperous and wealthy men, claiming a descent more ancient than that of many of the feudal Princes. A large number of them are enrolled among the Emperor's body-guard; and these have played a conspicuous part in the recent political changes in Japan, as the most conservative and anti-foreign element in the nation.

With these exceptions, I think that all classes are fairly represented in my stories.

The feudal system has passed away like a dissolving view before the eyes of those who have lived in Japan during the last few years. But when they arrived there

it was in full force, and there is not an incident narrated in the following pages, however strange it may appear to Europeans, for the possibility and probability of which those most competent to judge will not vouch. Nor, as many a recent event can prove, have heroism, chivalry, and devotion gone out of the land altogether. We may deplore and inveigh against the Yamato Damashi, or Spirit of Old Japan, which still breathes in the soul of the Samurai, but we cannot withhold our admiration from the self-sacrifices which men will still make for the love of their country.

The two first of the Tales have already appeared in the *Fortnightly Review*, and two of the Sermons, with a portion of the Appendix on the subject of the Hara-Kiri, in the pages of the *Cornhill Magazine*. I have to thank the editors of those periodicals for permission to reprint them here.

LONDON, *January* 7, 1871.

CONTENTS OF VOL. I.

PAGE

THE FORTY-SEVEN RÔNINS . . . . . .

THE LOVES OF GOMPACHI AND KOMURASAKI 35

KAZUMA'S REVENGE 70

A STORY OF THE OTOKODATÉ OF YEDO 98

THE WONDERFUL ADVENTURES OF FUNAKOSHI JIUYÉMON 169

THE ETA MAIDEN AND THE HATAMOTO 210

FAIRY TALES 256

THE TONGUE-CUT SPARROW 257

THE ACCOMPLISHED AND LUCKY TEA-KETTLE 260

THE CRACKLING MOUNTAIN 263

THE STORY OF THE OLD MAN WHO MADE WITHERED TREES TO BLOSSOM 267

THE BATTLE OF THE APE AND THE CRAB 272

FAIRY TALES—*continued.*

PAGE

THE ADVENTURES OF LITTLE PEACHLING 275

THE FOXES' WEDDING 278

THE HISTORY OF SAKATA KINTOKI 281

THE ELVES AND THE ENVIOUS NEIGHBOUR 284

ILLUSTRATIONS TO VOL. I.

	To face page
THE RÔNINS INVITE KÔTSUKÉ NO SUKÉ TO PERFORM HARA-KIRI	*Front.*
THE WELL IN WHICH THE HEAD WAS WASHED	6
THE SATSUMA MAN INSULTS OISHI KURANOSUKÉ	14
THE TOMB OF THE RÔNINS	28
THE TOMB OF THE SHIYOKU	46
GOMPACHI AWAKENED BY THE MAIDEN IN THE ROBBERS' DEN	48
FORGING THE SWORD	71
MATAGORÔ KILLS YUKIYÉ	77
THE DEATH OF DANYÉMON	82
TRICKS OF SWORDSMANSHIP AT ASAKUSA	132
THE DEATH OF CHÔBEI OF BANDZUIN	144
FUNAKOSHI JIUYÉMON ON BOARD THE PIRATE SHIP	175
JIUYÉMON PUNISHES HIS WIFE AND THE WRESTLER	189

	To face page
FUNAKOSHI JIUYÉMON AND THE GOBLINS	192
"GOKUMON"	202
A WRESTLING MATCH	204
CHAMPION WRESTLER	206
GENZABURÔ'S MEETING WITH THE ETA MAIDEN	215
THE TONGUE-CUT SPARROW	250
THE ACCOMPLISHED AND LUCKY TEA-KETTLE	252
THE HARE AND THE BADGER	255
THE OLD MAN WHO CAUSED WITHERED TREES TO FLOWER	260
THE APE AND THE CRAB	264
LITTLE PEACHLING	267
THE FOXES' WEDDING	270

ERRATUM.

VOL. I. p. 42.

For "the harbour of Tsukushi," *read* "a harbour of Tsukushi." Tsukushi is an ancient name of the island of Kiushiu.

TALES OF OLD JAPAN.

THE FORTY-SEVEN RÔNINS.

THE books which have been written of late years about Japan, have either been compiled from official records, or have contained the sketchy impressions of passing travellers. Of the inner life of the Japanese, the world at large knows but little: their religion, their superstitions, their ways of thought, the hidden springs by which they move—all these are as yet mysteries. Nor is this to be wondered at. The first Western men who came in contact with Japan—I am speaking not of the old Dutch and Portuguese traders and priests, but of the diplomatists and merchants of eleven years ago—met with a cold reception. Above all things, the native Government threw obstacles in the way of any inquiry into their language, literature, and history. The fact was that the Tycoon's Government—with whom alone, so long as the Mikado remained in seclusion in his sacred

capital at Kiôto, any relations were maintained—knew that the Imperial purple with which they sought to invest their chief must quickly fade before the strong sunlight which would be brought upon it so soon as there should be European linguists capable of examining their books and records. No opportunity was lost of throwing dust in the eyes of the new-comers, whom, even in the most trifling details, it was the official policy to lead astray. Now, however, there is no cause for concealment; the *Roi Fainéant* has shaken off his sloth, and his *Maire du Palais*, together, and an intelligible Government, which need not fear scrutiny from abroad, is the result: the records of the country being but so many proofs of the Mikado's title to power, there is no reason for keeping up any show of mystery. The path of inquiry is open to all; and although there is yet much to be learnt, some knowledge has been attained, in which it may interest those who stay at home to share.

The recent revolution in Japan has wrought changes social as well as political; and it may be that when, in addition to the advance which has already been made, railways and telegraphs shall have connected the principal points of the Land of Sunrise, the old Japanese, such as he was and had been for centuries when we found him eleven short years ago, will have become extinct. It has appeared to me that no better means could be chosen of preserving a record of a

curious and fast disappearing civilization, than the translation of some of the most interesting national legends and histories, together with other specimens of literature bearing upon the same subject. Thus the Japanese may tell their own tale, their translator only adding here and there a few words of heading or tag to a chapter, where an explanation or amplification may seem necessary. I fear that the long and hard names will often make my tales tedious reading, but I believe that those who will bear with the difficulty will learn more of the character of the Japanese people than by skimming over descriptions of travel and adventure, however brilliant. The lord and his retainer, the warrior and the priest, the humble artisan and the despised Eta or pariah, each in his turn will become a leading character in my budget of stories; and it is out of the mouths of these personages that I hope to show forth a tolerably complete picture of Japanese society.

Having said so much by way of preface, I beg my readers to fancy themselves wafted away to the shores of the Bay of Yedo—a fair, smiling landscape: gentle slopes, crested by a dark fringe of pines and firs, lead down to the sea; the quaint eaves of many a temple and holy shrine peep out here and there from the groves; the bay itself is studded with picturesque fisher-craft, the torches of which shine by night like glow-worms among the outlying forts; far away to the

west loom the goblin-haunted heights of Oyama, and beyond the twin hills of the Hakoné Pass—Fuji-Yama, the Peerless Mountain, solitary and grand, stands in the centre of the plain, from which it sprang vomiting flames twenty-one centuries ago.[1] For a hundred and sixty years the huge mountain has been at peace, but the frequent earthquakes still tell of hidden fires, and none can say when the red-hot stones and ashes may once more fall like rain over five provinces.

In the midst of a nest of venerable trees in Takanawa, a suburb of Yedo, is hidden Sengakuji, or the Spring-hill Temple, renowned throughout the length and breadth of the land for its cemetery, which contains the graves of the Forty-seven Rônins,[2] famous in Japanese history, heroes

[1] According to Japanese tradition, in the fifth year of the Emperor Kôrei (286 B.C.), the earth opened in the province of Omi, near Kiôto, and Lake Biwa, sixty miles long by about eighteen broad, was formed in the shape of a *Biwa*, or four-stringed lute, from which it takes its name. At the same time, to compensate for the depression of the earth, but at a distance of over three hundred miles from the lake, rose Fuji-Yama, the last eruption of which was in the year 1707. The last great earthquake at Yedo took place about fifteen years ago. Twenty thousand souls are said to have perished in it, and the dead were carried away and buried by cartloads; many persons, trying to escape from their falling and burning houses, were caught in great clefts, which yawned suddenly in the earth, and as suddenly closed upon the victims, crushing them to death. For several days heavy shocks continued to be felt, and the people camped out, not daring to return to such houses as had been spared, nor to build up those which lay in ruins.

[2] The word *Rônin* means, literally, a "wave-man;" one who is tossed about hither and thither, as a wave of the sea. It is used to designate persons of

of Japanese drama, the tale of whose deeds I am about to transcribe.

On the left-hand side of the main court of the temple is a chapel, in which, surmounted by a gilt figure of Kwanyin, the goddess of mercy, are enshrined the images of the forty-seven men, and of the master whom they loved so well. The statues are carved in wood, the faces coloured, and the dresses richly lacquered; as works of art they have great merit—the action of the heroes, each armed with his favourite weapon, being wonderfully life-like and spirited. Some are venerable men, with thin, grey hair (one is seventy-seven years old); others are mere boys of sixteen. Close by the chapel, at the side of a path leading up the hill, is a little well of pure water, fenced in and adorned with a

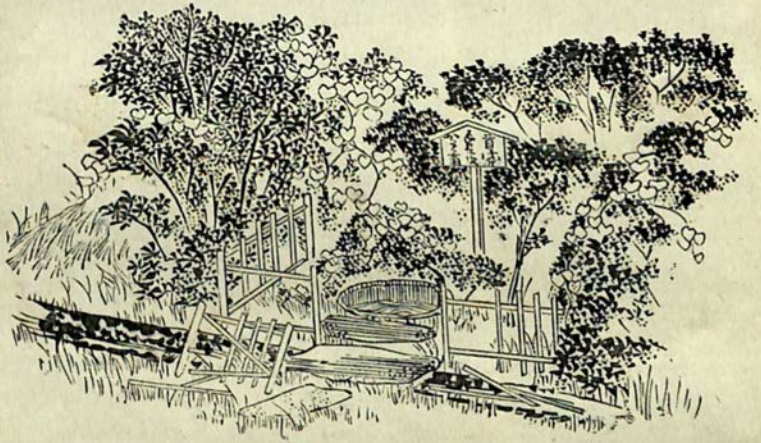
gentle blood, entitled to bear arms, who, having become separated from their feudal lords by their own act, or by dismissal, or by fate, wander about the country in the capacity of somewhat disreputable knights-errant, without ostensible means of living, in some cases offering themselves for hire to new masters, in others supporting themselves by pillage; or who, falling a grade in the social scale, go into trade, and become simple wardsmen. Sometimes it happens that for political reasons a man will become Rônin, in order that his lord may not be implicated in some deed of blood in which he is about to engage. Sometimes, also, men become Rônins, and leave their native place for a while, until some scrape in which they have become entangled shall have blown over; after which they return to their former allegiance. Now-a-days it is not unusual for men to become Rônins for a time, and engage themselves in the service of foreigners at the open ports, even in menial capacities, in the hope that they may pick up something of the language and lore of Western folks. I know instances of men of considerable position who have adopted this course in their zeal for education.

tiny fernery, over which is an inscription, setting forth that "This is the well in which the head was washed; you must not wash your hands or your feet here." A little further on is a stall, at which a poor old man earns a pittance by selling books, pictures, and medals, commemorating the loyalty of the Forty-seven; and higher up yet, shaded by a grove of stately trees, is a neat inclosure, kept up, as a signboard announces, by voluntary contributions, round which are ranged forty-eight little tombstones, each decked with evergreens, each with its tribute of water and incense for the comfort of the departed spirit. There were forty-seven Rônins; there are forty-eight tombstones, and the story of the forty-eighth is truly characteristic of Japanese ideas of honour. Almost touching the rail of the graveyard is a more imposing monument under which lies buried the lord, whose death his followers piously avenged.

And now for the story.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century there lived a daimio, called Asano Takumi no Kami, the Lord of the castle of Akô, in the province of Harima. Now it happened that an Imperial ambassador from the Court of the Mikado, having been sent to the Shogun[1] at Yedo, Takumi no Kami

[1] The full title of the Tycoon was Sei-i-tai-Shogun, "Barbarian-repressing Commander-in-chief." The style Tai Kun, Great Prince, was borrowed, in



THE WELL IN WHICH THE HEAD WAS WASHED.

and another noble called Kamei Sama were appointed to receive and feast the envoy; and a high official, named Kira Kôtsuké no Suké, was named to teach them the proper ceremonies to be observed upon the occasion. The two nobles were accordingly forced to go daily to the castle to listen to the instructions of Kôtsuké no Suké. But this Kôtsuké no Suké was a man greedy of money; and as he deemed that the presents which the two daimios, according to time-honoured custom, had brought him in return for his instruction, were mean and unworthy, he conceived a great hatred against them, and took no pains in teaching them, but on the contrary rather sought to make laughing-stocks of them. Takumi no Kami, restrained by a stern sense of duty, bore his insults with patience; but Kamei Sama, who had less control over his temper, was violently incensed, and determined to kill Kôtsuké no Suké.

One night when his duties at the castle were ended, Kamei Sama returned to his own palace, and having summoned his councillors[1] to a secret conference, said to them: "Kôtsuké

order to convey the idea of sovereignty to foreigners, at the time of the conclusion of the Treaties. The envoys sent by the Mikado from Kiôto to communicate to the Shogun the will of his sovereign, were received with Imperial honours, and the duty of entertaining them was confided to nobles of rank. The title Sei-i-tai-Shogun was first borne by Minamoto no Yoritomo, in the seventh month of the year 1192 A.D.

[1] Councillor, lit. "elder." The councillors of daimios were of two classes; the *Karô*, or "elder," an hereditary office, held by cadets of the Prince's

no Suké has insulted Takumi no Kami and myself during our service in attendance on the Imperial envoy. This is against all decency, and I was minded to kill him on the spot; but I bethought me that if I did such a deed within the precincts of the castle, not only would my own life be forfeit, but my family and vassals would be ruined: so I stayed my hand. Still the life of such a wretch is a sorrow to the people, and to-morrow when I go to Court I will slay him: my mind is made up, and I will listen to no remonstrance." And as he spoke his face became livid with rage.

Now one of Kamei Sama's councillors was a man of great judgment, and when he saw from his lord's manner that remonstrance would be useless, he said: "Your lordship's words are law; your servant will make all preparations accordingly; and to-morrow, when your lordship goes to Court, if this Kôtsuké no Suké should again be insolent, let him die the death." And his lord was pleased at this speech, and waited with impatience for the day to break, that he might return to Court and kill his enemy.

But the councillor went home, and was sorely troubled, and thought anxiously about what his prince had said. And as he reflected, it occurred to him that since Kôtsuké no Suké had

family, and the *Yônin*, or "man of business," who was selected on account of his merits. These "councillors" play no mean part in Japanese history.

the reputation of being a miser he would certainly be open to a bribe, and that it was better to pay any sum, no matter how great, than that his lord and his house should be ruined. So he collected all the money he could, and, giving it to his servants to carry, rode off in the night to Kôtsuké no Suké's palace, and said to his retainers: "My master, who is now in attendance upon the Imperial envoy, owes much thanks to my Lord Kôtsuké no Suké, who has been at so great pains to teach him the proper ceremonies to be observed during the reception of the Imperial envoy. This is but a shabby present which he has sent by me, but he hopes that his lordship will condescend to accept it, and commends himself to his lordship's favour." And, with these words, he produced a thousand ounces of silver for Kôtsuké no Suké, and a hundred ounces to be distributed among his retainers.

When the latter saw the money, their eyes sparkled with pleasure, and they were profuse in their thanks; and begging the councillor to wait a little, they went and told their master of the lordly present which had arrived with a polite message from Kamei Sama. Kôtsuké no Suké in eager delight sent for the councillor into an inner chamber, and, after thanking him, promised on the morrow to instruct his master carefully in all the different points of etiquette. So the councillor, seeing the miser's glee, rejoiced at the success of his plan; and having taken his leave returned

home in high spirits. But Kamei Sama, little thinking how his vassal had propitiated his enemy, lay brooding over his vengeance, and on the following morning at daybreak went to Court in solemn procession.

When Kôtsuké no Suké met him, his manner had completely changed, and nothing could exceed his courtesy. "You have come early to Court this morning, my Lord Kamei," said he. "I cannot sufficiently admire your zeal. I shall have the honour to call your attention to several points of etiquette to-day. I must beg your lordship to excuse my previous conduct, which must have seemed very rude; but I am naturally of a cross-grained disposition, so I pray you to forgive me." And as he kept on humbling himself and making fair speeches, the heart of Kamei Sama was gradually softened, and he renounced his intention of killing him. Thus, by the cleverness of his councillor, was Kamei Sama, with all his house, saved from ruin.

Shortly after this, Takumi no Kami, who had sent no present, arrived at the castle, and Kôtsuké no Suké turned him into ridicule even more than before, provoking him with sneers and covert insults; but Takumi no Kami affected to ignore all this, and submitted himself patiently to Kôtsuké no Suké's orders.

This conduct, so far from producing a good effect, only made Kôtsuké no Suké despise him the more, until at last he

said haughtily: "Here, my Lord of Takumi, the ribbon of my sock has come untied; be so good as to tie it up for me."

Takumi no Kami, although burning with rage at the affront, still thought that as he was on duty he was bound to obey, and tied up the ribbon of the sock. Then Kôtsuké no Suké, turning from him, petulantly exclaimed: "Why, how clumsy you are! You cannot so much as tie up the ribbon of a sock properly! Any one can see that you are a boor from the country, and know nothing of the manners of Yedo." And with a scornful laugh he moved towards an inner room.

But the patience of Takumi no Kami was exhausted; this last insult was more than he could bear.

"Stop a moment, my lord," cried he.

"Well, what is it?" replied the other. And, as he turned round, Takumi no Kami drew his dirk, and aimed a blow at his head; but Kôtsuké no Suké, being protected by the Court cap which he wore, the wound was but a scratch, so he ran away; and Takumi no Kami, pursuing him, tried a second time to cut him down, but, missing his aim, struck his dirk into a pillar. At this moment an officer, named Kajikawa Yosobei, seeing the affray, rushed up, and holding back the infuriated noble, gave Kôtsuké no Suké time to make good his escape.

Then there arose a great uproar and confusion, and Takumi no Kami was arrested and disarmed, and confined in one of

the apartments of the palace under the care of the censors. A council was held, and the prisoner was given over to the safeguard of a daimio, called Tamura Ukiyô no Daibu, who kept him in close custody in his own house, to the great grief of his wife and of his retainers; and when the deliberations of the council were completed, it was decided that, as he had committed an outrage and attacked another man within the precincts of the palace, he must perform *hara kiri*, —that is, commit suicide by disembowelling; his goods must be confiscated, and his family ruined. Such was the law. So Takumi no Kami performed *hara kiri*, his castle of Akô was confiscated, and his retainers having become Rônins, some of them took service with other daimios, and others became merchants.

Now amongst these retainers was his principal councillor, a man called Oishi Kuranosuké, who, with forty-six other faithful dependants, formed a league to avenge their master's death by killing Kôtsuké no Suké. This Oishi Kuranosuké was absent at the castle of Akô at the time of the affray, which, had he been with his prince, would never have occurred; for, being a wise man, he would not have failed to propitiate Kôtsuké no Suké by sending him suitable presents; while the councillor who was in attendance on the prince at Yedo was a dullard, who neglected this precaution, and so caused the death of his master and the ruin of his house.

So Oishi Kuranosuké and his forty-six companions began to lay their plans of vengeance against Kôtsuké no Suké; but the latter was so well guarded by a body of men lent to him by a daimio called Uyésugi Sama, whose daughter he had married, that they saw that the only way of attaining their end would be to throw their enemy off his guard. With this object they separated and disguised themselves, some as carpenters or craftsmen, others as merchants; and their chief, Kuranosuké, went to Kiôto, and built a house in the quarter called Yamashina, where he took to frequenting houses of the worst repute, and gave himself up to drunkenness and debauchery, as if nothing were further from his mind than revenge. Kôtsuké no Suké, in the meanwhile, suspecting that Takumi no Kami's former retainers would be scheming against his life, secretly sent spies to Kiôto, and caused a faithful account to be kept of all that Kuranosuké did. The latter, however, determined thoroughly to delude the enemy into a false security, went on leading a dissolute life with harlots and winebibbers. One day, as he was returning home drunk from some low haunt, he fell down in the street and went to sleep, and all the passers-by laughed him to scorn. It happened that a Satsuma man saw this, and said: "Is not this Oishi Kuranosuké, who was a councillor of Asano Takumi no Kami, and who, not having the heart to avenge his lord, gives himself up to women and

wine? See how he lies drunk in the public street! Faithless beast! Fool and craven! Unworthy the name of a Samurai!"[1]

And he trod on Kuranosuké's face as he slept, and spat upon him; but when Kôtsuké no Suké's spies reported all this at Yedo, he was greatly relieved at the news, and felt secure from danger.

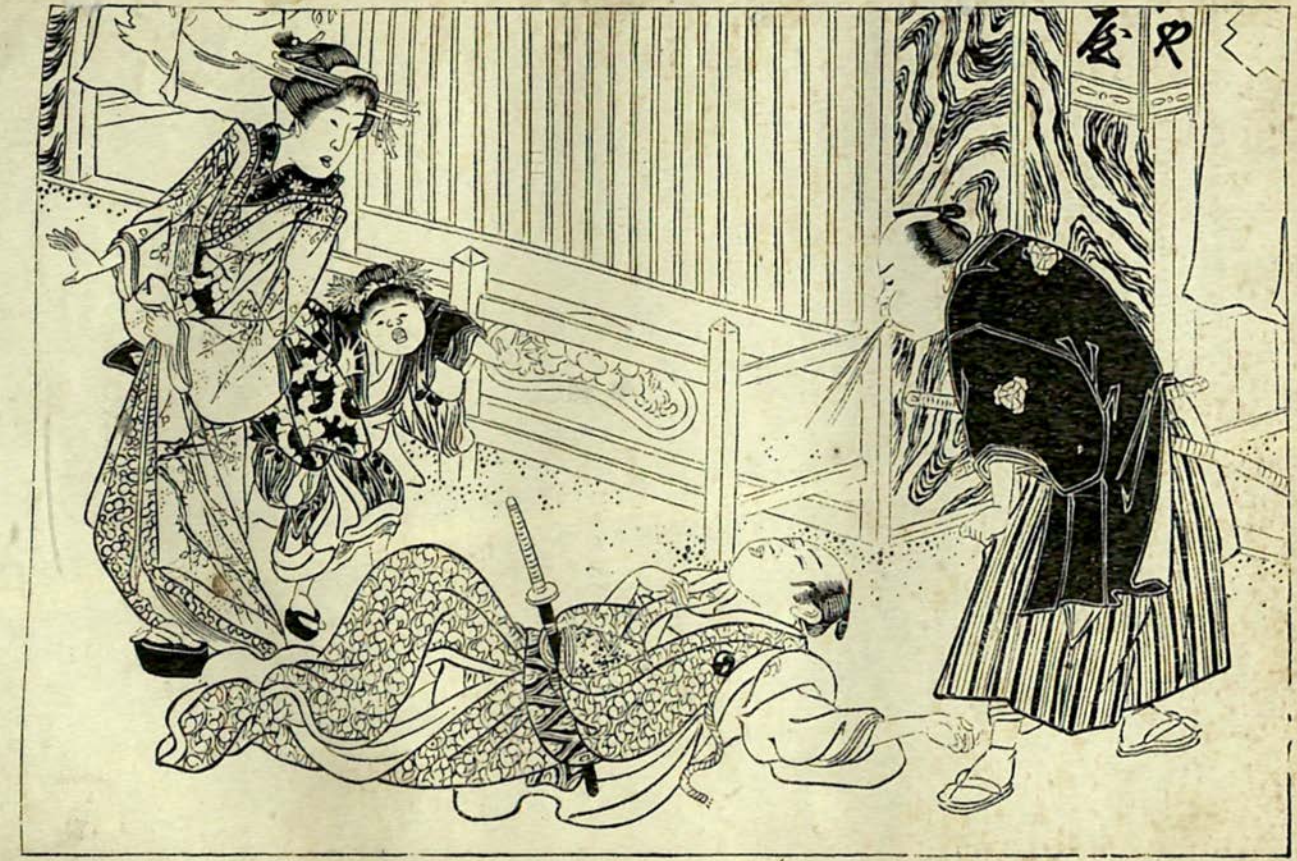
One day Kuranosuké's wife, who was bitterly grieved to see her husband lead this abandoned life, went to him and said: "My lord, you told me at first that your debauchery was but a trick to make your enemy relax in watchfulness. But indeed, indeed, this has gone too far. I pray and beseech you to put some restraint upon yourself."

"Trouble me not," replied Kuranosuké, "for I will not listen to your whining. Since my way of life is displeasing to you, I will divorce you, and you may go about your business; and I will buy some pretty young girl from one of the public-houses, and marry her for my pleasure. I am sick of the sight of an old woman like you about the house, so get you gone—the sooner the better."

So saying, he flew into a violent rage, and his wife, terror-stricken, pleaded piteously for mercy.

"Oh, my lord! unsay those terrible words! I have been

[1] *Samurai*, a man belonging to the *Buké* or military class, entitled to bear arms.



THE SATSUMA MAN INSULTS OISHI KURANOSUKÉ.

your faithful wife for twenty years, and have borne you three children; in sickness and in sorrow I have been with you; you cannot be so cruel as to turn me out of doors now. Have pity! have pity!"

"Cease this useless wailing. My mind is made up, and you must go; and as the children are in my way also, you are welcome to take them with you."

When she heard her husband speak thus, in her grief she sought her eldest son, Oishi Chikara, and begged him to plead for her, and pray that she might be pardoned. But nothing would turn Kuranosuké from his purpose, so his wife was sent away, with the two younger children, and went back to her native place. But Oishi Chikara remained with his father.

The spies communicated all this without fail to Kôtsuké no Suké, and he, when he heard how Kuranosuké, having turned his wife and children out of doors and bought a concubine, was grovelling in a life of drunkenness and lust, began to think that he had no longer anything to fear from the retainers of Takumi no Kami, who must be cowards, without the courage to avenge their lord. So by degrees he began to keep a less strict watch, and sent back half of the guard which had been lent to him by his father-in-law, Uyésugi Sama. Little did he think how he was falling into the trap laid for him by Kuranosuké,

who, in his zeal to slay his lord's enemy, thought nothing of divorcing his wife and sending away his children! Admirable and faithful man!

In this way Kuranosuké continued to throw dust in the eyes of his foe, by persisting in his apparently shameless conduct; but his associates all went to Yedo, and, having in their several capacities as workmen and pedlars contrived to gain access to Kôtsuké no Suké's house, made themselves familiar with the plan of the building and the arrangement of the different rooms, and ascertained the character of the inmates, who were brave and loyal men, and who were cowards; upon all of which matters they sent regular reports to Kuranosuké. And when at last it became evident from the letters which arrived from Yedo that Kôtsuké no Suké was thoroughly off his guard, Kuranosuké rejoiced that the day of vengeance was at hand; and, having appointed a trysting-place at Yedo, he fled secretly from Kiôto, eluding the vigilance of his enemy's spies. Then the forty-seven men, having laid all their plans, bided their time patiently.

It was now mid-winter, the twelfth month of the year, and the cold was bitter. One night, during a heavy fall of snow, when the whole world was hushed, and peaceful men were stretched in sleep upon the mats, the Rônins determined that no more favourable opportunity could

occur for carrying out their purpose. So they took counsel together, and, having divided their band into two parties, assigned to each man his post. One band, led by Oishi Kuranosuké, was to attack the front gate, and the other, under his son Oishi Chikara, was to attack the postern of Kôtsuké no Suké's house; but as Chikara was only sixteen years of age, Yoshida Chiuzayémon was appointed to act as his guardian. Further it was arranged that a drum, beaten at the order of Kuranosuké, should be the signal for the simultaneous attack; and that if any one slew Kôtsuké no Suké and cut off his head he should blow a shrill whistle, as a signal to his comrades, who would hurry to the spot, and, having identified the head, carry it off to the temple called Sengakuji, and lay it as an offering before the tomb of their dead lord. Then they must report their deed to the Government, and await the sentence of death which would surely be passed upon them. To this the Rônins one and all pledged themselves. Midnight was fixed upon as the hour, and the forty-seven comrades, having made all ready for the attack, partook of a last farewell feast together, for on the morrow they must die. Then Oishi Kuranosuké addressed the band, and said:—

"To-night we shall attack our enemy in his palace; his retainers will certainly resist us, and we shall be obliged to

kill them. But to slay old men and women and children is a pitiful thing; therefore, I pray you each one to take great heed lest you kill a single helpless person." His comrades all applauded this speech, and so they remained, waiting for the hour of midnight to arrive.

When the appointed hour came, the Rônins set forth. The wind howled furiously, and the driving snow beat in their faces; but little cared they for wind or snow as they hurried on their road, eager for revenge. At last they reached Kôtsuké no Suké's house, and divided themselves into two bands; and Chikara, with twenty-three men, went round to the back gate. Then four men, by means of a ladder of ropes which they hung on to the roof of the porch, effected an entry into the courtyard; and, as they saw signs that all the inmates of the house were asleep, they went into the porter's lodge where the guard slept, and, before the latter had time to recover from their astonishment, bound them. The terrified guard prayed hard for mercy, that their lives might be spared; and to this the Rônins agreed on condition that the keys of the gate should be given up; but the others tremblingly said that the keys were kept in the house of one of their officers, and that they had no means of obtaining them. Then the Rônins lost patience, and with a hammer dashed in pieces the big wooden bolt which secured the gate, and the doors flew open to the right and

to the left. At the same time Chikara and his party broke in by the back gate.

Then Oishi Kuranosuké sent a messenger to the neighbouring houses, bearing the following message:—"We, the Rônins who were formerly in the service of Asano Takumi no Kami, are this night about to break into the palace of Kôtsuké no Suké, to avenge our lord. As we are neither night robbers nor ruffians, no hurt will be done to the neighbouring houses. We pray you to set your minds at rest." And as Kôtsuké no Suké was hated by his neighbours for his covetousness, they did not unite their forces to assist him. Another precaution was yet taken. Lest any of the people inside should run out to call the relations of the family to the rescue, and these coming in force should interfere with the plans of the Rônins, Kuranosuké stationed ten of his men armed with bows on the roof of the four sides of the courtyard, with orders to shoot any retainers who might attempt to leave the place. Having thus laid all his plans and posted his men, Kuranosuké with his own hand beat the drum and gave the signal for attack.

Ten of Kôtsuké no Suké's retainers, hearing the noise, woke up; and, drawing their swords, rushed into the front room to defend their master. At this moment the Rônins, who had burst open the door of the front hall, entered the same room. Then arose a furious fight between the two

parties, in the midst of which Chikara, leading his men through the garden, broke into the back of the house; and Kôtsuké no Suké, in terror of his life, took refuge, with his wife and female servants, in a closet in the verandah; while the rest of his retainers, who slept in the barrack outside the house, made ready to go to the rescue. But the Rônins who had come in by the front door, and were fighting with the ten retainers, ended by overpowering and slaying the latter without losing one of their own number; after which, forcing their way bravely towards the back rooms, they were joined by Chikara and his men, and the two bands were united in one.

By this time the remainder of Kôtsuké no Suké's men had come in, and the fight became general; and Kuranosuké, sitting on a camp-stool, gave his orders and directed the Rônins. Soon the inmates of the house perceived that they were no match for their enemy, so they tried to send out intelligence of their plight to Uyésugi Sama, their lord's father-in-law, begging him to come to the rescue with all the force at his command. But the messengers were shot down by the archers whom Kuranosuké had posted on the roof. So no help coming, they fought on in despair. Then Kuranosuké cried out with a loud voice: "Kôtsuké no Suké alone is our enemy; let some one go inside and bring him forth dead or alive!"

Now in front of Kôtsuké no Suké's private room stood

three brave retainers with drawn swords. The first was Kobayashi Héhachi, the second was Waku Handaiyu, and the third was Shimidzu Ikkaku, all good men and true, and expert swordsmen. So stoutly did these men lay about them that for a while they kept the whole of the Rônins at bay, and at one moment even forced them back. When Oishi Kuranosuké saw this, he ground his teeth with rage, and shouted to his men: "What! did not every man of you swear to lay down his life in avenging his lord, and now are you driven back by three men? Cowards, not fit to be spoken to! to die fighting in a master's cause should be the noblest ambition of a retainer!" Then turning to his own son Chikara, he said, "Here, boy! engage those men, and if they are too strong for you, die!"

Spurred by these words, Chikara seized a spear and gave battle to Waku Handaiyu, but could not hold his ground, and backing by degrees, was driven out into the garden, where he missed his footing and slipped into a pond; but as Handaiyu, thinking to kill him, looked down into the pond, Chikara cut his enemy in the leg and caused him to fall, and then crawling out of the water despatched him. In the meanwhile Kobayashi Héhachi and Shimidzu Ikkaku had been killed by the other Rônins, and of all Kôtsuké no Suké's retainers not one fighting man remained. Chikara, seeing this, went with his bloody sword in his hand into a back room to search

for Kôtsuké no Suké, but he only found the son of the latter, a young lord named Kira Sahioyé, who, carrying a halberd, attacked him, but was soon wounded and fled. Thus the whole of Kôtsuké no Suké's men having been killed, there was an end of the fighting; but as yet there was no trace of Kôtsuké no Suké to be found.

Then Kuranosuké diyided his men into several parties and searched the whole house, but all in vain; women and children weeping were alone to be seen. At this the forty-seven men began to lose heart in regret, that after all their toil they had allowed their enemy to escape them, and there was a moment when in their despair they agreed to commit suicide together upon the spot; but they determined to make one more effort. So Kuranosuké went into Kôtsuké no Suké's sleeping-room, and touching the quilt with his hands, exclaimed, "I have just felt the bed-clothes and they are yet warm, and so methinks that our enemy is not far off. He must certainly be hidden somewhere in the house." Greatly excited by this, the Rônins renewed their search. Now in the raised part of the room, near the place of honour, there was a picture hanging; taking down this picture, they saw that there was a large hole in the plastered wall, and on thrusting a spear in they could feel nothing beyond it. So one of the Rônins, called Yazama Jiutarô, got into the hole, and found that on the other side there was a little courtyard, in

which there stood an outhouse for holding charcoal and firewood. Looking into the outhouse, he spied something white at the further end, at which he struck with his spear, when two armed men sprang out upon him and tried to cut him down, but he kept them back until one of his comrades came up and killed one of the two men and engaged the other, while Jiutarô entered the outhouse and felt about with his spear. Again seeing something white, he struck it with his lance, when a cry of pain betrayed that it was a man; so he rushed up, and the man in white clothes, who had been wounded in the thigh, drew a dirk and aimed a blow at him. But Jiutarô wrested the dirk from him, and clutching him by the collar, dragged him out of the outhouse. Then the other Rônin came up, and they examined the prisoner attentively, and saw that he was a noble-looking man, some sixty years of age, dressed in a white satin sleeping-robe, which was stained by the blood from the thigh-wound which Jiutarô had inflicted. The two men felt convinced that this was no other than Kôtsuké no Suké, and they asked him his name, but he gave no answer, so they gave the signal whistle, and all their comrades collected together at the call; then Oishi Kurano-suké, bringing a lantern, scanned the old man's features, and it was indeed Kôtsuké no Suké; and if further proof were wanting, he still bore a scar on his forehead where their master, Asano Takumi no Kami, had wounded him during the

affray in the castle. There being no possibility of mistake, therefore, Oishi Kuranosuké went down on his knees, and addressing the old man very respectfully, said:

"My lord, we are the retainers of Asano Takumi no Kami. Last year your lordship and our master quarrelled in the palace, and our master was sentenced to *hara kiri*, and his family was ruined. We have come to-night to avenge him, as is the duty of faithful and loyal men. I pray your lordship to acknowledge the justice of our purpose. And now, my lord, we beseech you to perform *hara kiri*. I myself shall have the honour to act as your second, and when, with all humility, I shall have received your lordship's head, it is my intention to lay it as an offering upon the grave of Asano Takumi no Kami."

Thus, in consideration of the high rank of Kôtsuké no Suké, the Rônins treated him with the greatest courtesy, and over and over again entreated him to perform *hara kiri*. But he crouched speechless and trembling. At last Kuranosuké, seeing that it was vain to urge him to die the death of a nobleman, forced him down, and cut off his head with the same dirk with which Asano Takumi no Kami had killed himself. Then the forty-seven comrades, elated at having accomplished their design, placed the head in a bucket, and prepared to depart; but before leaving the house they carefully extinguished all the lights and fires in the place, lest

by any accident a fire should break out and the neighbours suffer.

As they were on their way to Takanawa, the suburb in which the temple called Sengakuji stands, the day broke; and the people flocked out to see the forty-seven men, who, with their clothes and arms all blood-stained, presented a terrible appearance; and every one praised them, wondering at their valour and faithfulness. But they expected every moment that Kôtsuké no Suké's father-in-law would attack them and carry off the head, and made ready to die bravely sword in hand. However, they reached Takanawa in safety, for Matsudaira Aki no Kami, one of the eighteen chief daimios of Japan, of whose house Asano Takumi no Kami had been a cadet, had been highly pleased when he heard of the last night's work, and he had made ready to assist the Rônins in case they were attacked. So Kôtsuké no Suké's father-in-law dared not pursue them.

At about seven in the morning they came opposite to the palace of Matsudaira Mutsu no Kami, the Prince of Sendai, and the Prince, hearing of it, sent for one of his councillors and said: "The retainers of Takumi no Kami have slain their lord's enemy, and are passing this way; I cannot sufficiently admire their devotion, so, as they must be tired and hungry after their night's work, do you go and invite them to come in here, and set some gruel and a cup of wine before them."

So the councillor went out and said to Oishi Kuranosuké: "Sir, I am a councillor of the Prince of Sendai, and my master bids me beg you, as you must be worn out after all you have undergone, to come in and partake of such poor refreshment as we can offer you. This is my message to you from my lord."

"I thank you, sir," replied Kuranosuké. "It is very good of his lordship to trouble himself to think of us. We shall accept his kindness gratefully."

So the forty-seven Rônins went into the palace, and were feasted with gruel and wine, and all the retainers of the Prince of Sendai came and praised them.

Then Kuranosuké turned to the councillor and said, "Sir, we are truly indebted to you for this kind hospitality; but as we have still to hurry to Sengakuji, we must needs humbly take our leave." And, after returning many thanks to their hosts, they left the palace of the Prince of Sendai and hastened to Sengakuji, where they were met by the abbot of the monastery, who went to the front gate to receive them, and led them to the tomb of Takumi no Kami.

And when they came to their lord's grave, they took the head of Kôtsuké no Suké, and having washed it clean in a well hard by, laid it as an offering before the tomb. When they had done this, they engaged the priests of the temple to come and read prayers while they burnt incense: first Oishi

Kuranosuké burnt incense, and then his son Oishi Chikara, and after them the other forty-five men performed the same ceremony. Then Kuranosuké, having given all the money that he had by him to the abbot, said :—

"When we forty-seven men shall have performed *hara kiri*, I beg you to bury us decently. I rely upon your kindness. This is but a trifle that I have to offer; such as it is, let it be spent in masses for our souls!"

And the abbot, marvelling at the faithful courage of the men, with tears in his eyes pledged himself to fulfil their wishes. So the forty-seven Rônins, with their minds at rest, waited patiently until they should receive the orders of the Government.

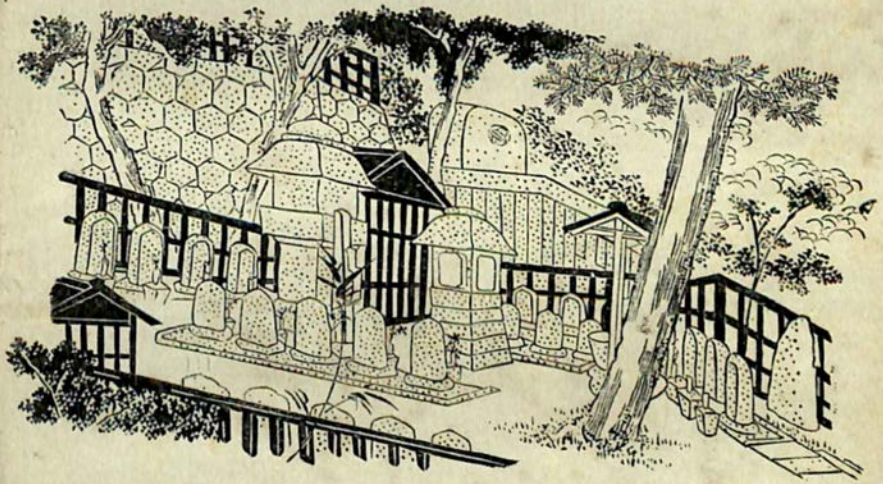
At last they were summoned to the Supreme Court, where the governors of Yedo and the public censors had assembled; and the sentence passed upon them was as follows: "Whereas, neither respecting the dignity of the city nor fearing the Government, having leagued yourselves together to slay your enemy, you violently broke into the house of Kira Kôtsuké no Suké by night and murdered him, the sentence of the Court is, that, for this audacious conduct, you perform *hara kiri*." When the sentence had been read, the forty-seven Rônins were divided into four parties, and handed over to the safe keeping of four different daimios; and sheriffs were sent to the palaces of those daimios in

whose presence the Rônins were made to perform *hara kiri*. But, as from the very beginning they had all made up their minds that to this end they must come, they met their death nobly; and their corpses were carried to Sengakuji, and buried in front of the tomb of their master, Asano Takumi no Kami. And when the fame of this became noised abroad, the people flocked to pray at the graves of these faithful men.

Among those who came to pray was a Satsuma man, who, prostrating himself before the grave of Oishi Kuranosuké, said: "When I saw you lying drunk by the roadside at Yamashina, in Kiôto, I knew not that you were plotting to avenge your lord; and, thinking you to be a faithless man, I trampled on you and spat in your face as I passed. And now I have come to ask pardon and offer atonement for the insult of last year." With those words he prostrated himself again before the grave, and, drawing a dirk from his girdle, stabbed himself in the belly and died. And the chief priest of the temple, taking pity upon him, buried him by the side of the Rônins; and his tomb still remains to be seen with those of the forty-seven comrades.

This is the end of the story of the forty-seven Rônins.

A terrible picture of fierce heroism which it is impossible not to admire. In the Japanese mind this feeling of admira-



THE TOMBS OF THE RONINS.

tion is unmixed, and hence it is that the forty-seven Rônins receive almost divine honours. Pious hands still deck their graves with green boughs and burn incense upon them; the clothes and arms which they wore are preserved carefully in a fire-proof store-house attached to the temple, and exhibited yearly to admiring crowds, who behold them probably with little less veneration than is accorded to the relics of Aix-la-Chapelle or Trèves; and once in sixty years the monks of Sengakuji reap quite a harvest for the good of their temple by holding a commemorative fair or festival, to which the people flock during nearly two months.

A silver key once admitted me to a private inspection of the relics. We were ushered, my friend and myself, into a back apartment of the spacious temple, overlooking one of those marvellous miniature gardens, cunningly adorned with rockeries and dwarf trees, in which the Japanese delight. One by one, carefully labelled and indexed boxes containing the precious articles were brought out and opened by the chief priest. Such a curious medley of old rags and scraps of metal and wood! Home-made chain armour, composed of wads of leather secured together by pieces of iron, bear witness to the secrecy with which the Rônins made ready for the fight. To have bought armour would have attracted attention, so they made it with their own hands. Old moth-eaten surcoats, bits of helmets, three flutes, a writing-

box that must have been any age at the time of the tragedy, and is now tumbling to pieces; tattered trousers of what once was rich silk brocade, now all unravelled and befringed; scraps of leather, part of an old gauntlet, crests and badges, bits of sword handles, spear-heads and dirks, the latter all red with rust, but with certain patches more deeply stained as if the fatal clots of blood were never to be blotted out: all these were reverently shown to us. Among the confusion and litter were a number of documents, yellow with age and much worn at the folds. One was a plan of Kôtsuké no Suké's house, which one of the Rônins obtained by marrying the daughter of the builder who designed it. Three of the manuscripts appeared to me so curious that I obtained leave to have copies taken of them.

The first is the receipt given by the retainers of Kôtsuké no Suké's son in return for the head of their lord's father, which the priests restored to the family, and runs as follows:—

"MEMORANDUM:—
"ITEM. ONE HEAD.
"ITEM. ONE PAPER PARCEL.

"The above articles are acknowledged to have been received.

"Signed, { SAYADA MAGOBEI. (*Loc. sigill.*)
{ SAITÔ KUNAI. (*Loc. sigill.*)

"To the priests deputed from the Temple Sengakuji,
"His Reverence SEKISHI,
"His Reverence ICHIDON."

The second paper is a document explanatory of their conduct, a copy of which was found on the person of each of the forty-seven men.

"Last year, in the third month, Asano Takumi no Kami, upon the occasion of the entertainment of the Imperial ambassador, was driven, by the force of circumstances, to attack and wound my Lord Kôtsuké no Suké in the castle, in order to avenge an insult offered to him. Having done this without considering the dignity of the place, and having thus disregarded all rules of propriety, he was condemned to *hara kiri*, and his property and castle of Akô were forfeited to the State, and were delivered up by his retainers to the officers deputed by the Shogun to receive them. After this his followers were all dispersed. At the time of the quarrel the high officials present prevented Asano Takumi no Kami from carrying out his intention of killing his enemy, my Lord Kôtsuké no Suké. So Asano Takumi no Kami died without having avenged himself, and this was more than his retainers could endure. It is impossible to remain under the same heaven with the enemy of lord or father; for this reason we have dared to declare enmity against a personage of so exalted rank. This day we shall attack Kira Kôtsuké no Suké, in order to finish the deed of vengeance which was begun by our dead lord. If any honourable person should find our bodies after death, he is respectfully requested to open and read this document.

"15th year of Genroku. 12th month.

"Signed, OISHI KURANOSUKÉ, Retainer of Asano Takumi no Kami, and forty-six others." [1]

The third manuscript is a paper which the Forty-seven Rônins laid upon the tomb of their master, together with the head of Kira Kôtsuké no Suké:—

"The 15th year of Genroku, the 12th month, and 15th day. We have come this day to do homage here, forty-seven men in all, from Oishi Kura-

[1] It is usual for a Japanese, when bent upon some deed of violence, the end of which, in his belief, justifies the means, to carry about with him a document, such as that translated above, in which he sets forth his motives, that his character may be cleared after death.

nosuké down to the foot-soldier, Terasaka Kichiyémon, all cheerfully about to lay down our lives on your behalf. We reverently announce this to the honoured spirit of our dead master. On the 14th day of the third month of last year our honoured master was pleased to attack Kira Kôtsuké no Suké, for what reason we know not. Our honoured master put an end to his own life, but Kira Kôtsuké no Suké lived. Although we fear that after the decree issued by the Government this plot of ours will be displeasing to our honoured master, still we, who have eaten of your food, could not without blushing repeat the verse, 'Thou shalt not live under the same heaven nor tread the same earth with the enemy of thy father or lord,' nor could we have dared to leave hell and present ourselves before you in paradise, unless we had carried out the vengeance which you began. Every day that we waited seemed as three autumns to us. Verily, we have trodden the snow for one day, nay, for two days, and have tasted food but once. The old and decrepit, the sick and ailing, have come forth gladly to lay down their lives. Men might laugh at us, as at grasshoppers trusting in the strength of their arms, and thus shame our honoured lord; but we could not halt in our deed of vengeance. Having taken counsel together last night, we have escorted my Lord Kôtsuké no Suké hither to your tomb. This dirk,[1] by which our honoured lord set great store last year, and entrusted to our care, we now bring back. If your noble spirit be now present before this tomb, we pray you, as a sign, to take the dirk, and, striking the head of your enemy with it a second time, to dispel your hatred for ever. This is the respectful statement of forty-seven men."

The text, "Thou shalt not live under the same heaven with the enemy of thy father," is based upon the Confucian books. Dr. Legge, in his "Life and Teachings of Confucius," p. 113, has an interesting paragraph summing up the doctrine of the sage upon the subject of revenge.

"In the second book of the 'Le Ke' there is the following passage:—'With the slayer of his father a man may not live under the same heaven; against the slayer of his brother a man must never have to go home to fetch a weapon;

[1] The dirk with which Asano Takumi no Kumi disembowelled himself, and with which Oishi Kuranosuké cut off Kôtsuké no Suké's head.

with the slayer of his friend a man may not live in the same state.' The *lex talionis* is here laid down in its fullest extent. The 'Chow Le' tells us of a provision made against the evil consequences of the principle by the appointment of a minister called 'The Reconciler.' The provision is very inferior to the cities of refuge which were set apart by Moses for the manslayer to flee to from the fury of the avenger. Such as it was, however, it existed, and it is remarkable that Confucius, when consulted on the subject, took no notice of it, but affirmed the duty of blood-revenge in the strongest and most unrestricted terms. His disciple, Tsze Hea, asked him, 'What course is to be pursued in the murder of a father or mother?' He replied, 'The son must sleep upon a matting of grass with his shield for his pillow; he must decline to take office; he must not live under the same heaven with the slayer. When he meets him in the market-place or the court, he must have his weapon ready to strike him.' 'And what is the course in the murder of a brother?' 'The surviving brother must not take office in the same State with the slayer; yet, if he go on his prince's service to the State where the slayer is, though he meet him, he must not fight with him.' 'And what is the course in the murder of an uncle or cousin?' 'In this case the nephew or cousin is not the principal. If the principal, on whom the revenge devolves, can take it, he has only to stand behind with his weapon in his hand, and support him.'"

I will add one anecdote to show the sanctity which is attached to the graves of the Forty-seven. In the month of September 1868, a certain man came to pray before the grave of Oishi Chikara. Having finished his prayers, he deliberately performed *hara kiri*,[1] and, the belly wound not being mortal, despatched himself by cutting his throat. Upon his person were found papers setting forth that, being a Rônin and without means of earning a living, he had petitioned to be allowed to enter the clan of the Prince of Chôshiu, which

[1] A purist in Japanese matters may object to the use of the words *hara kiri* instead of the more elegant expression *Seppuku*. I retain the more vulgar form as being better known, and therefore more convenient.

he looked upon as the noblest clan in the realm; his petition having been refused, nothing remained for him but to die, for to be a Rônin was hateful to him, and he would serve no other master than the Prince of Chôshiu: what more fitting place could he find in which to put an end to his life than the graveyard of these Braves? This happened at about two hundred yards' distance from my house, and when I saw the spot an hour or two later, the ground was all bespattered with blood, and disturbed by the death-struggles of the man.

THE LOVES OF GOMPACHI AND KOMURASAKI.

WITHIN two miles or so from Yedo, and yet well away from the toil and din of the great city, stands the village of Meguro. Once past the outskirts of the town, the road leading thither is bounded on either side by woodlands rich in an endless variety of foliage, broken at intervals by the long, low line of villages and hamlets. As we draw near to Meguro, the scenery, becoming more and more rustic, increases in beauty. Deep shady lanes, bordered by hedgerows as luxurious as any in England, lead down to a valley of rice fields bright with the emerald green of the young crops. To the right and to the left rise knolls of fantastic shape, crowned with a profusion of Cryptomerias, Scotch firs and other cone-bearing trees, and fringed with thickets of feathery bamboos, bending their stems gracefully to the light summer breeze. Wherever there is a spot shadier and pleasanter to look upon than the rest, there may be seen the red portal of a shrine which the simple piety of the country folk has raised

to Inari Sama, the patron god of farming, or to some other tutelary deity of the place. At the eastern outlet of the valley a strip of blue sea bounds the horizon; westward are the distant mountains. In the foreground, in front of a farm-house, snug-looking, with its roof of velvety-brown thatch, a troop of sturdy urchins, sun-tanned and stark naked, are frisking in the wildest gambols, all heedless of the scolding voice of the withered old grandam who sits spinning and minding the house, while her son and his wife are away toiling at some outdoor labour. Close at our feet runs a stream of pure water, in which a group of countrymen are washing the vegetables which they will presently shoulder and carry off to sell by auction in the suburbs of Yedo. Not the least beauty of the scene consists in the wondrous clearness of an atmosphere so transparent that the most distant outlines are scarcely dimmed, while the details of the nearer ground stand out in sharp, bold relief, now lit by the rays of a vertical sun, now darkened under the flying shadows thrown by the fleecy clouds which sail across the sky. Under such a heaven, what painter could limn the lights and shades which flit over the woods, the pride of Japan, whether in late autumn, when the russets and yellows of our own trees are mixed with the deep crimson glow of the maples, or in spring-time, when plum and cherry trees and wild camellias—giants, fifty feet high—are in full blossom?

All that we see is enchanting, but there is a strange stillness in the groves; rarely does the song of a bird break the silence; indeed, I know but one warbler whose note has any music in it, the *uguisu*, by some enthusiasts called the Japanese nightingale—at best, a king in the kingdom of the blind. The scarcity of animal life of all descriptions, man and mosquitoes alone excepted, is a standing wonder to the traveller; the sportsman must toil many a weary mile to get a shot at boar, or deer, or pheasant; and the plough of the farmer and the trap of the poacher, who works in and out of season, threaten to exterminate all wild creatures; unless, indeed, the Government should, as they threatened in the spring of 1869, put in force some adaptation of European game-laws. But they are lukewarm in the matter; a little hawking on a duck-pond satisfies the cravings of the modern Japanese sportsman, who knows that, game-laws or no game-laws, the wild fowl will never fail in winter; and the days are long past when my Lord the Shogun used to ride forth with a mighty company to the wild places about Mount Fuji, there camping out and hunting the boar, the deer, and the wolf, believing that in so doing he was fostering a manly and military spirit in the land.

There is one serious drawback to the enjoyment of the beauties of the Japanese country, and that is the intolerable affront which is continually offered to one's sense of smell;

the whole of what should form the sewerage of the city is carried out on the backs of men and horses, to be thrown upon the fields; and, if you would avoid the overpowering nuisance, you must walk handkerchief in hand, ready to shut out the stench which assails you at every moment.

It would seem natural, while writing of the Japanese country, to say a few words about the peasantry, their relation to the lord of the soil, and their government. But these I must reserve for another place. At present our dealings are with the pretty village of Meguro.

At the bottom of a little lane, close to the entrance of the village, stands an old shrine of the Shintô (the form of hero-worship which existed in Japan before the introduction of Confucianism or of Buddhism), surrounded by lofty Cryptomerias. The trees around a Shintô shrine are specially under the protection of the god to whom the altar is dedicated; and, in connection with them, there is a kind of magic still respected by the superstitious, which recalls the waxen dolls, through the medium of which sorcerers of the middle ages in Europe, and indeed those of ancient Greece, as Theocritus tells us, pretended to kill the enemies of their clients. This is called *Ushi no toki mairi*, or "going to worship at the hour of the ox,"[1] and is practised by jealous women who wish to be revenged upon their faithless lovers.

[1] The Chinese, and the Japanese following them, divide the day of twenty-

When the world is at rest, at two in the morning, the hour of which the ox is the symbol, the woman rises; she dons a white robe and high sandals or clogs; her coif is a metal tripod, in which are thrust three lighted candles; around her neck she hangs a mirror, which falls upon her bosom; in her left hand she carries a small straw figure, the effigy of the lover who has abandoned her, and in her right she grasps a hammer and nails, with which she fastens the figure to one of the sacred trees that surround the shrine. There she prays for the death of the traitor, vowing that, if her petition be heard, she will herself pull out the nails which now offend the god by wounding the mystic tree. Night after night she comes to the shrine, and each night she strikes in two or more nails, believing that every nail

four hours into twelve periods, each of which has a sign something like the signs of the Zodiac :—

Midnight until two in the morning is represented by the rat.

2 a.m.	until	4 a.m.	,,	,,	ox.
4 a.m.	,,	6 a.m.	,,	,,	tiger.
6 a.m.	,,	8 a.m.	,,	,,	hare.
8 a.m.	,,	10 a.m.	,,	,,	dragon.
10 a.m.	,,	12 noon	,,	,,	snake.
12 noon	,,	2 p.m.	,,	,,	horse.
2 p.m.	,,	4 p.m.	,,	,,	ram.
4 p.m.	,,	6 p.m.	,,	,,	ape.
6 p.m.	,,	8 p.m.	,,	,,	cock.
8 p.m.	,,	10 p.m.	,,	,,	hog.
10 p.m.	,,	Midnight	,,	,,	fox.

will shorten her lover's life, for the god, to save his tree, will surely strike him dead.

Meguro is one of the many places round Yedo to which the good citizens flock for purposes convivial or religious, or both; hence it is that, cheek by jowl with the old shrines and temples, you will find many a pretty tea-house, standing at the rival doors of which Mesdemoiselles Sugar, Wave of the Sea, Flower, Seashore, and Chrysanthemum are pressing in their invitations to you to enter and rest. Not beautiful these damsels, if judged by our standard, but the charm of Japanese women lies in their manner and dainty little ways, and the tea-house girl, being a professional decoy-duck, is an adept in the art of flirting,—*en tout bien tout honneur*, be it remembered; for she is not to be confounded with the frail beauties of the Yoshiwara, nor even with her sisterhood near the ports open to foreigners, and to their corrupting influence. For, strange as it seems, our contact all over the East has an evil effect upon the natives.

In one of the tea-houses a thriving trade is carried on in the sale of wooden tablets, some six inches square, adorned with the picture of a pink cuttlefish on a bright blue ground. These are ex-votos, destined to be offered up at the Temple of Yakushi Niurai, the Buddhist Æsculapius, which stands opposite, and concerning the foundation of which the following legend is told.

In the days of old there was a priest called Jikaku, who at the age of forty years, it being the autumn of the tenth year of the period called Tenchô (A.D. 833), was suffering from disease of the eyes, which had attacked him three years before. In order to be healed from this disease he carved a figure of Yakushi Niurai, to which he used to offer up his prayers. Five years later he went to China, taking with him the figure as his guardian saint, and at a place called Kairetsu it protected him from robbers and wild beasts and from other calamities. There he passed his time in studying the sacred laws both hidden and revealed, and after nine years set sail to return to Japan. When he was on the high seas a storm arose, and a great fish attacked and tried to swamp the ship, so that the rudder and mast were broken, and the nearest shore being that of a land inhabited by devils, to retreat or to advance was equally dangerous. Then the holy man prayed to the patron saint whose image he carried, and as he prayed, behold the true Yakushi Niurai appeared in the centre of the ship, and said to him:—

"Verily, thou hast travelled far that the sacred laws might be revealed for the salvation of many men; now, therefore, take my image, which thou carriest in thy bosom, and cast it into the sea, that the wind may abate, and that thou mayest be delivered from this land of devils."

The commands of the saints must be obeyed, so with tears

in his eyes, the priest threw into the sea the sacred image which he loved. Then did the wind abate, and the waves were stilled, and the ship went on her course as though she were being drawn by unseen hands until she reached a safe haven. In the tenth month of the same year the priest again set sail, trusting to the power of his patron saint, and reached the harbour of Tsukushi without mishap. For three years he prayed that the image which he had cast away might be restored to him, until at last one night he was warned in a dream that on the sea-shore at Matsura Yakushi Niurai would appear to him. In consequence of this dream he went to the province of Hizen, and landed on the sea-shore at Hirato, where, in the midst of a blaze of light, the image which he had carved appeared to him twice, riding on the back of a cuttlefish. Thus was the image restored to the world by a miracle. In commemoration of his recovery from the disease of the eyes and of his preservation from the dangers of the sea, that these things might be known to all posterity, the priest established the worship of Tako Yakushi Niurai ("Yakushi Niurai of the Cuttlefish"), and came to Meguro, where he built the Temple of Fudô Sama,[1] another Buddhist divinity. At this time there was an epidemic of small-pox in the village, so that men fell down and died in the street, and the

[1] Fudô, literally "the motionless:" Buddha in the state called Nirvana.

holy man prayed to Fudô Sama that the plague might be stayed. Then the god appeared to him, and said:—

"The saint Yakushi Niurai of the Cuttlefish, whose image thou carriest, desires to have his place in this village, and he will heal this plague. Thou shalt, therefore, raise a temple to him here that not only this small-pox, but other diseases for future generations, may be cured by his power."

Hearing this, the priest shed tears of gratitude, and having chosen a piece of fine wood, carved a large figure of his patron saint of the cuttlefish, and placed the smaller image inside of the larger, and laid it up in this temple, to which people still flock that they may be healed of their diseases.

Such is the story of the miracle, translated from a small ill-printed pamphlet sold by the priests of the temple, all the decorations of which, even to a bronze lantern in the middle of the yard, are in the form of a cuttlefish, the sacred emblem of the place.

What pleasanter lounge in which to while away a hot day could a man wish for, than the shade of the trees borne by the hill on which stands the Temple of Fudô Sama? Two jets of pure water springing from the rock are voided by spouts carved in the shape of dragons into a stone basin enclosed by rails, within which it is written that "no woman may enter." If you are in luck, you may cool yourself by watching some devotee, naked save his loin-cloth, performing

the ceremony called *Suigiyô;* that is to say, praying under the waterfall that his soul may be purified through his body. In winter it requires no small pluck to go through this penance, yet I have seen a penitent submit to it for more than a quarter of an hour on a bitterly cold day in January. In summer, on the other hand, the religious exercise called *Hiyakudo,* or "the hundred times," which may also be seen here to advantage, is no small trial of patience. It consists in walking backwards and forwards a hundred times between two points within the sacred precincts, repeating a prayer each time. The count is kept either upon the fingers or by depositing a length of twisted straw each time that the goal is reached; at this temple the place allotted for the ceremony is between a grotesque bronze figure of Tengu Sama ("the Dog of Heaven"), the terror of children, a most hideous monster with a gigantic nose, which it is beneficial to rub with a finger afterwards to be applied to one's own nose, and a large brown box inscribed with the characters *Hiyaku Do* in high relief, which may generally be seen full of straw tallies. It is no sinecure to be a good Buddhist, for the gods are not lightly to be propitiated. Prayer and fasting, mortification of the flesh, abstinence from wine, from women, and from favourite dishes, are the only passports to rising in office, prosperity in trade, recovery from sickness, or a happy marriage with a beloved maiden. Nor will mere faith without

works be efficient. A votive tablet of proportionate value to the favour prayed for, or a sum of money for the repairs of the shrine or temple, is necessary to win the favour of the gods. Poorer persons will cut off the queue of their hair and offer that up; and at Horinouchi, a temple in great renown some eight or nine miles from Yedo, there is a rope about two inches and a half in diameter, and about six fathoms long, entirely made of human hair so given to the gods; it lies coiled up, dirty, moth-eaten, and uncared for, at one end of a long shed full of tablets and pictures, by the side of a rude native fire-engine. The taking of life being displeasing to Buddha, outside many of the temples old women and children earn a livelihood by selling sparrows, small eels, carp, and tortoises, which the worshipper sets free in honour of the deity, within whose territory cocks and hens and doves, tame and unharmed, perch on every jutty, frieze, buttress, and coigne of vantage.

But of all the marvellous customs that I wot of in connection with Japanese religious exercises, none appears to me so strange as that of spitting at the images of the gods, more especially at the statues of the Ni-ô, the two huge red or red and green statues which, like Gog and Magog, emblems of strength, stand as guardians of the chief Buddhist temples. The figures are protected by a network of iron wire, through which the votaries, praying the while, spit

pieces of paper, which they had chewed up into a pulp. If the pellet sticks to the statue, the omen is favourable; if it falls, the prayer is not accepted. The inside of the great bell at the Tycoon's burial-ground, and almost every holy statue throughout the country, are all covered with these out-spittings from pious mouths.[1]

Through all this discourse about temples and tea-houses, I am coming by degrees to the goal of our pilgrimage—two old stones, mouldering away in a rank, overgrown graveyard hard by, an old old burying-ground, forgotten by all save those who love to dig out the tales of the past. The key is kept by a ghoulish old dame, almost as time-worn and mil-dewed as the tomb over which she watches. Obedient to our call, and looking forward to a fee ten times greater than any native would give her, she hobbles out, and, opening the gate, points out the stone bearing the inscription, the "Tomb of the Shiyoku" (fabulous birds, which, living one within the other—a mysterious duality contained in one body—are the emblem of connubial love and fidelity). By this stone stands another, graven with a longer legend, which runs as follows:—

"In the old days of Genroku, she pined for the beauty of her lover, who was as fair to look upon as the flowers; and

[1] It will be readily understood that the customs and ceremonies to which I have alluded belong only to the gross superstitions with which ignorance has overlaid that pure Buddhism of which Professor Max Müller has pointed out the very real beauties.

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THE TOMB OF THE SHIYOKU.

now beneath the moss of this old tombstone all has perished of her save her name. Amid the changes of a fitful world, this tomb is decaying under the dew and rain; gradually crumbling beneath its own dust, its outline alone remains. Stranger! bestow an alms to preserve this stone; and we, sparing neither pain nor labour, will second you with all our hearts. Erecting it again, let us preserve it from decay for future generations, and let us write the following verse upon it:—'These two birds, beautiful as the cherry-blossoms, perished before their time, like flowers broken down by the wind before they have borne seed.'"

Under the first stone is the dust of Gompachi, robber and murderer, mixed with that of his true love Komurasaki, who lies buried with him. Her sorrows and constancy have hallowed the place, and pious people still come to burn incense and lay flowers before the grave. How she loved him even in death may be seen from the following old-world story.

About two hundred and thirty years ago there lived in the service of a daimio of the province of Inaba, a young man, called Shirai Gompachi, who, when he was but sixteen years of age, had already won a name for his personal beauty and valour, and for his skill in the use of arms. Now it happened that one day a dog belonging to him fought with another dog belonging to a fellow-clansman, and the two

masters, being both passionate youths, disputing as to whose dog had had the best of the fight, quarrelled and came to blows, and Gompachi slew his adversary; and in consequence of this, he was obliged to flee from his country, and make his escape to Yedo.

And so Gompachi set out on his travels.

One night, weary and footsore, he entered what appeared to him to be a roadside inn, ordered some refreshment, and went to bed, little thinking of the danger that menaced him: for as luck would have it, this inn turned out to be the trysting-place of a gang of robbers, into whose clutches he had thus unwittingly fallen. To be sure, Gompachi's purse was but scantily furnished, but his sword and dirk were worth some three hundred ounces of silver, and upon these the robbers (of whom there were ten) had cast envious eyes, and had determined to kill the owner for their sake; but he, all unsuspicious, slept on in fancied security.

In the middle of the night he was startled from his deep slumbers by some one stealthily opening the sliding door which led into his room, and rousing himself with an effort, he beheld a beautiful young girl, fifteen years of age, who, making signs to him not to stir, came up to his bedside, and said to him in a whisper:—

"Sir, the master of this house is the chief of a gang of robbers, who have been plotting to murder you this night for

GOMPACHI AWAKENED BY THE MAIDEN IN THE ROBBERS' DEN.

the sake of your clothes and your sword. As for me, I am the daughter of a rich merchant in Mikawa: last year the robbers came to our house, and carried off my father's treasure and myself. I pray you, sir, take me with you, and let us fly from this dreadful place."

She wept as she spoke, and Gompachi was at first too much startled to answer; but being a youth of high courage and a cunning fencer to boot, he soon recovered his presence of mind, and determined to kill the robbers, and to deliver the girl out of their hands. So he replied:—

"Since you say so, I will kill these thieves, and rescue you this very night; only do you, when I begin the fight, run outside the house, that you may be out of harm's way, and remain in hiding until I join you."

Upon this understanding the maiden left him, and went her way. But he lay awake, holding his breath and watching; and when the thieves crept noiselessly into the room, where they supposed him to be fast asleep, he cut down the first man that entered, and stretched him dead at his feet. The other nine, seeing this, laid about them with their drawn swords, but Gompachi, fighting with desperation, mastered them at last, and slew them. After thus ridding himself of his enemies, he went outside the house, and called to the girl, who came running to his side, and joyfully travelled on with him to Mikawa, where her father dwelt; and when they

reached Mikawa, he took the maiden to the old man's house, and told him how, when he had fallen among thieves, his daughter had come to him in his hour of peril, and saved him out of her great pity; and how he, in return, rescuing her from her servitude, had brought her back to her home. When the old folks saw their daughter whom they had lost restored to them, they were beside themselves with joy, and shed tears for very happiness; and, in their gratitude, they pressed Gompachi to remain with them, and they prepared feasts for him, and entertained him hospitably: but their daughter, who had fallen in love with him for his beauty and knightly valour, spent her days in thinking of him, and of him alone. The young man, however, in spite of the kindness of the old merchant, who wished to adopt him as his son, and tried hard to persuade him to consent to this, was fretting to go to Yedo and take service as an officer in the household of some noble lord; so he resisted the entreaties of the father and the soft speeches of the daughter, and made ready to start on his journey; and the old merchant, seeing that he would not be turned from his purpose, gave him a parting gift of two hundred ounces of silver, and sorrowfully bade him farewell.

But alas for the grief of the maiden, who sat sobbing her heart out and mourning over her lover's departure! He, all the while thinking more of ambition than of love, went to

her and comforted her, and said: "Dry your eyes, sweetheart, and weep no more, for I shall soon come back to you. Do you, in the meanwhile, be faithful and true to me, and tend your parents with filial piety."

So she wiped away her tears and smiled again, when she heard him promise that he would soon return to her. And Gompachi went his way, and in due time came near to Yedo.

But his dangers were not yet over; for late one night, arriving at a place called Suzugamori, in the neighbourhood of Yedo, he fell in with six highwaymen, who attacked him, thinking to make short work of killing and robbing him. Nothing daunted, he drew his sword, and despatched two out of the six; but, being weary and worn out with his long journey, he was sorely pressed, and the struggle was going hard with him, when a wardsman,[1] who happened to pass that way riding in a chair, seeing the affray, jumped down from his chair and drawing his dirk came to the rescue, and between them they put the robbers to flight.

Now it turned out that this kind tradesman, who had so happily come to the assistance of Gompachi, was no other

[1] Japanese cities are divided into wards, and every tradesman and artisan is under the authority of the chief of the ward in which he resides. The word *chônin*, or wardsman, is generally used in contradistinction to the word *samurai*, which has already been explained as denoting a man belonging to the military class.

than Chôbei of Bandzuin, the chief of the *Otokodaté*, or Friendly Society of the wardsmen of Yedo—a man famous in the annals of the city, whose life, exploits, and adventures are recited to this day, and form the subject of another tale.

When the highwaymen had disappeared, Gompachi, turning to his deliverer, said—

"I know not who you may be, sir, but I have to thank you for rescuing me from a great danger."

And as he proceeded to express his gratitude, Chôbei replied—

"I am but a poor wardsman, a humble man in my way, sir; and if the robbers ran away, it was more by good luck than owing to any merit of mine. But I am filled with admiration at the way you fought; you displayed a courage and a skill that were beyond your years, sir."

"Indeed," said the young man, smiling with pleasure at hearing himself praised; "I am still young and inexperienced, and am quite ashamed of my bungling style of fencing."

"And now may I ask you, sir, whither you are bound?"

"That is almost more than I know myself, for I am a *rônin*, and have no fixed purpose in view."

"That is a bad job," said Chôbei, who felt pity for the lad. "However, if you will excuse my boldness in making such

an offer, being but a wardsman, until you shall have taken service I would fain place my poor house at your disposal."

Gompachi accepted the offer of his new but trusty friend with thanks; so Chôbei led him to his house, where he lodged him and hospitably entertained him for some months. And now Gompachi, being idle and having nothing to care for, fell into bad ways, and began to lead a dissolute life, thinking of nothing but gratifying his whims and passions; he took to frequenting the Yoshiwara, the quarter of the town which is set aside for tea-houses and other haunts of wild young men, where his handsome face and figure attracted attention, and soon made him a great favourite with all the beauties of the neighbourhood.

About this time men began to speak loud in praise of the charms of Komurasaki, or "Little Purple," a young girl who had recently come to the Yoshiwara, and who in beauty and accomplishments outshone all her rivals. Gompachi, like the rest of the world, heard so much of her fame that he determined to go to the house where she dwelt, at the sign of "The Three Sea-coasts," and judge for himself whether she deserved all that men said of her. Accordingly he set out one day, and having arrived at "The Three Sea-coasts," asked to see Komurasaki; and being shown into the room where she was sitting, advanced towards her; but when their eyes met, they both started back with a cry of astonishment,

for this Komurasaki, the famous beauty of the Yoshiwara, proved to be the very girl whom several months before Gompachi had rescued from the robbers' den, and restored to her parents in Mikawa. He had left her in prosperity and affluence, the darling child of a rich father, when they had exchanged vows of love and fidelity; and now they met in a common stew in Yedo. What a change! what a contrast! How had the riches turned to rust, the vows to lies!

"What is this?" cried Gompachi, when he had recovered from his surprise. "How is it that I find you here pursuing this vile calling, in the Yoshiwara? Pray explain this to me, for there is some mystery beneath all this which I do not understand."

But Komurasaki—who, having thus unexpectedly fallen in with her lover that she had yearned for, was divided between joy and shame—answered, weeping:

"Alas! my tale is a sad one, and would be long to tell. After you left us last year, calamity and reverses fell upon our house; and when my parents became poverty-stricken, I was at my wits' end to know how to support them: so I sold this wretched body of mine to the master of this house, and sent the money to my father and mother; but, in spite of this, troubles and misfortunes multiplied upon them, and now, at last, they have died of misery and grief. And, oh! lives there in this wide world so unhappy a

wretch as I! But now that I have met you again—you who are so strong—help me who am weak. You saved me once—do not, I implore you, desert me now!" and as she told her piteous tale the tears streamed from her eyes.

"This is, indeed, a sad story," replied Gompachi, much affected by the recital. "There must have been a wonderful run of bad luck to bring such misfortune upon your house, which but a little while ago I recollect so prosperous. However, mourn no more, for I will not forsake you. It is true that I am too poor to redeem you from your servitude, but at any rate I will contrive so that you shall be tormented no more. Love me, therefore, and put your trust in me." When she heard him speak so kindly she was comforted, and wept no more, but poured out her whole heart to him, and forgot her past sorrows in the great joy of meeting him again.

When it became time for them to separate, he embraced her tenderly and returned to Chôbei's house; but he could not banish Komurasaki from his mind, and all day long he thought of her alone; and so it came about that he went daily to the Yoshiwara to see her, and if any accident detained him, she, missing the accustomed visit, would become anxious and write to him to inquire the cause of his absence. At last, pursuing this course of life, his stock of money ran short, and as, being a *rônin* and without any fixed employ-

ment, he had no means of renewing his supplies, he was ashamed of showing himself penniless at "The Three Sea-coasts." Then it was that a wicked spirit arose within him, and he went out and murdered a man, and having robbed him of his money carried it to the Yoshiwara.

From bad to worse is an easy step, and the tiger that has once tasted blood is dangerous. Blinded and infatuated by his excessive love, Gompachi kept on slaying and robbing, so that, while his outer man was fair to look upon, the heart within him was that of a hideous devil. At last his friend Chôbei could no longer endure the sight of him, and turned him out of his house; and as, sooner or later, virtue and vice meet with their reward, it came to pass that Gompachi's crimes became notorious, and the Government having set spies upon his track, he was caught redhanded and arrested; and his evil deeds having been fully proved against him, he was carried off to the execution ground at Suzugamori, the "Bell Grove," and beheaded as a common malefactor.

Now when Gompachi was dead, Chôbei's old affection for the young man returned, and, being a kind and pious man, he went and claimed his body and head, and buried him at Meguro, in the grounds of the Temple called Boronji.

When Komurasaki heard the people at Yoshiwara gossiping about her lover's end, her grief knew no bounds, so she fled secretly from "The Three Sea-coasts," and came to

Meguro and threw herself upon the newly-made grave. Long she prayed and bitterly she wept over the tomb of him whom, with all his faults, she had loved so well, and then, drawing a dagger from her girdle, she plunged it in her breast and died. The priests of the temple, when they saw what had happened, wondered greatly and were astonished at the loving faithfulness of this beautiful girl, and taking compassion on her, they laid her side by side with Gompachi in one grave, and over the grave they placed a stone which remains to this day, bearing the inscription "The Tomb of the Shiyoku." And still the people of Yedo visit the place, and still they praise the beauty of Gompachi and the filial piety and fidelity of Komurasaki.

Let us linger for a moment longer in the old graveyard. The word which I have translated a few lines above as "loving faithfulness" means literally "chastity." When Komurasaki sold herself to supply the wants of her ruined parents, she was not, according to her lights, forfeiting her claim to virtue. On the contrary, she could perform no greater act of filial piety, and, so far from incurring reproach among her people, her self-sacrifice would be worthy of all praise in their eyes. This idea has led to grave misunderstanding abroad, and indeed no phase of Japanese life has been so misrepresented as this. I have heard it stated,

and seen it printed, that it is no disgrace for a respectable Japanese to sell his daughter, that men of position and family often choose their wives from such places as "The Three Sea-coasts," and that up to the time of her marriage the conduct of a young girl is a matter of no importance whatever. Nothing could be more unjust or more untrue. It is only the neediest people that sell their children to be waitresses, singers, or prostitutes. It does occasionally happen that the daughter of a *Samurai*, or gentleman, is found in a house of ill fame, but such a case could only occur at the death or utter ruin of the parents, and an official investigation of the matter has proved it to be so exceptional, that the presence of a young lady in such a place is an enormous attraction, her superior education and accomplishments shedding a lustre over the house. As for gentlemen marrying women of bad character, are not such things known in Europe? Do ladies of the *demi-monde* never make good marriages? *Mésalliances* are far rarer in Japan than with us. Certainly among the lowest class of the population such marriages may occasionally occur, for it often happens that a woman can lay by a tempting dowry out of her wretched earnings; but amongst the gentry of the country they are unknown.

And yet a girl is not disgraced if for her parents' sake she sells herself to a life of misery so great, that, when a Japanese

enters a house of ill-fame, he is forced to leave his sword and dirk at the door for two reasons—first, to prevent brawling; secondly, because it is known that some of the women inside so loathe their existence that they would put an end to it, could they get hold of a weapon.

It is a curious fact that in all the Daimio's castle-towns, with the exception of some which are also seaports, open prostitution is strictly forbidden, although, if report speaks truly, public morality rather suffers than gains by the prohibition.

The misapprehension which exists upon the subject of prostitution in Japan may be accounted for by the fact that foreign writers, basing their judgment upon the vice of the open ports, have not hesitated to pronounce the Japanese women unchaste. As fairly might a Japanese, writing about England, argue from the street-walkers of Portsmouth or Plymouth to the wives, sisters, and daughters of these very authors. In some respects the gulf fixed between virtue and vice in Japan is even greater than in England. The Eastern courtesan is confined to a certain quarter of the town, and distinguished by a peculiarly gaudy costume, and by a head-dress which consists of a forest of light tortoiseshell hair-pins, stuck round her head like a saint's glory—a glory of shame which a modest woman would sooner die than wear. Vice jostling virtue in the public places; virtue imitating the

fashions set by vice, and buying trinkets or furniture at the sale of vice's effects—these are social phenomena which the East knows not.

The custom prevalent among the lower orders of bathing in public bath-houses without distinction of the sexes, is another circumstance which has tended to spread abroad very false notions upon the subject of the chastity of the Japanese women. Every traveller is shocked by it, and every writer finds in it matter for a page of pungent description. Yet it is only those who are so poor (and they must be poor indeed) that they cannot afford a bath at home, who, at the end of their day's work, go to the public bath-house to refresh themselves before sitting down to their evening meal: having been used to the scene from their childhood, they see no indelicacy in it; it is a matter of course, and *honi soit qui mal y pense:* certainly there is far less indecency and immorality resulting from this public bathing, than from the promiscuous herding together of all sexes and ages which disgraces our own lodging-houses in the great cities, and the hideous hovels in which some of our labourers have to pass their lives; nor can it be said that there is more confusion of sexes amongst the lowest orders in Japan than in Europe. Speaking upon the subject once with a Japanese gentleman, I observed that we considered it an act of indecency for men and women to wash together. He shrugged his shoulders as he answered, "But

then Westerns have such prurient minds." Some time ago, at the open port of Yokohama, the Government, out of deference to the prejudices of foreigners, forbade the men and women to bathe together, and no doubt this was the first step towards putting down the practice altogether: as for women tubbing in the open streets of Yedo, I have read of such things in books written by foreigners; but during a residence of three years and a half, in which time I crossed and recrossed every part of the great city at all hours of the day, I never once saw such a sight. I believe myself that it can only be seen at certain hot mineral springs in remote country districts.

The best answer to the general charge of immorality which has been brought against the Japanese women during their period of unmarried life, lies in the fact that every man who can afford to do so keeps the maidens of his family closely guarded in the strictest seclusion. The daughter of poverty, indeed, must work and go abroad, but not a man is allowed to approach the daughter of a gentleman; and she is taught that if by accident any insult should be offered to her, the knife which she carries at her girdle is meant for use, and not merely as a badge of her rank. Not long ago a tragedy took place in the house of one of the chief nobles in Yedo. One of My Lady's tire-women, herself a damsel of gentle blood, and gifted with rare beauty, had attracted the attention of a retainer in the palace, who fell desperately in love with her.

For a long time the strict rules of decorum by which she was hedged in prevented him from declaring his passion; but at last he contrived to gain access to her presence, and so far forgot himself, that she, drawing her poniard, stabbed him in the eye, so that he was carried off fainting, and presently died. The girl's declaration, that the dead man had attempted to insult her, was held to be sufficient justification of her deed, and, instead of being blamed, she was praised and extolled for her valour and chastity. As the affair had taken place within the four walls of a powerful noble, there was no official investigation into the matter, with which the authorities of the palace were competent to deal. The truth of this story was vouched for by two or three persons whose word I have no reason to doubt, and who had themselves been mixed up in it; I can bear witness that it is in complete harmony with Japanese ideas; and certainly it seems more just that Lucretia should kill Tarquin than herself.

The better the Japanese people come to be known and understood, the more, I am certain, will it be felt that a great injustice has been done them in the sweeping attacks which have been made upon their women. Writers are agreed, I believe, that their matrons are, as a rule, without reproach. If their maidens are chaste, as I contend that from very force of circumstances they cannot help being, what becomes of all these charges of vice and immodesty? Do they not rather

recoil upon the accusers, who would appear to have studied the Japanese woman only in the harlot of Yokohama?

Having said so much, I will now try to give some account of the famous Yoshiwara[1] of Yedo, to which frequent allusion will have to be made in the course of these tales.

At the end of the sixteenth century the courtesans of Yedo lived in three special places: these were the street called Kôjimachi, in which dwelt the women who came from Kiôto; the Kamakura Street, and a spot opposite the great bridge, in which last two places lived women brought from Suruga. Besides these there afterwards came women from Fushimi and from Nara, who lodged scattered here and there throughout the town. This appears to have scandalised a certain reformer, named Shôji Jinyémon, who, in the year 1612, addressed a memorial to the Government, petitioning that the women who lived in different parts of the town should be collected in one "Flower Quarter." His petition was granted in the year 1617, and he fixed upon a place called Fukiyacho, which, on account of the quantities of rushes which grew there, was named *Yoshi-Wara*, or the rush-moor, a name which now-a-days, by a play upon the word *yoshi*, is written

[1] The name Yoshiwara, which is becoming generic for "Flower Districts," —*Anglicè*, quarters occupied by brothels,—is sometimes derived from the town Yoshiwara, in Sunshine, because it was said that the women of that place furnished a large proportion of the beauties of the Yedo Yoshiwara. The correct derivation is probably that given below.

with two Chinese characters, signifying the "good" or "lucky moor." The place was divided into four streets, called the Yedo Street, the Second Yedo Street, the Kiôto Street, and the Second Kiôto Street.

In the eighth month of the year 1655, when Yedo was beginning to increase in size and importance, the Yoshiwara, preserving its name, was transplanted bodily to the spot which it now occupies at the northern end of the town. And the streets in it were named after the places from which the greater number of their inhabitants originally came, as the "Sakai Street," the "Fushimi Street," &c.

The official Guide to the Yoshiwara for 1869 gives a return of 153 brothels, containing 3,289 courtesans of all classes, from the *Oiran*, or proud beauty, who, dressed up in gorgeous brocade of gold and silver, with painted face and gilded lips, and with her teeth fashionably blacked, has all the young bloods of Yedo at her feet, down to the humble *Shinzo*, or white-toothed woman, who rots away her life in the common stews. These figures do not, however, represent the whole of the prostitution of Yedo; the Yoshiwara is the chief, but not the only, abiding-place of the public women. At Fukagawa there is another Flower District, built upon the same principle as the Yoshiwara; while at Shinagawa, Shinjiku, Itabashi, Senji, and Kadzukappara, the hotels contain women who, nominally only waitresses, are in reality prostitutes.

There are also women called *Jigoku-Onna*, or hell-women, who, without being borne on the books of any brothel, live in their own houses, and ply their trade in secret. On the whole, I believe the amount of prostitution in Yedo to be wonderfully small, considering the vast size of the city.

There are 394 tea-houses in the Yoshiwara, which are largely used as places of assignation, and which on those occasions are paid, not by the visitors frequenting them, but by the keepers of the brothels. It is also the fashion to give dinners and drinking-parties at these houses, for which the services of *Taikomochi*, or jesters, among whom there are thirty-nine chief celebrities, and of singing and dancing girls, are retained. The Guide to the Yoshiwara gives a list of fifty-five famous singing-girls, besides a host of minor stars. These women are not to be confounded with the courtesans. Their conduct is very closely watched by their masters, and they always go out to parties in couples or in bands, so that they may be a check upon one another. Doubtless, however, in spite of all precautions, the shower of gold does from time to time find its way to Danaë's lap; and to be the favoured lover of a fashionable singer or dancer is rather a feather in the cap of a fast young Japanese gentleman. The fee paid to singing-girls for performing during a space of two hours is one shilling and fourpence each; for six hours the fee is quadrupled, and it is customary to give the girls a

hana, or present, for themselves, besides their regular pay, which goes to the master of the troupe to which they belong.

Courtesans, singing women, and dancers are bought by contractors, either as children, when they are educated for their calling, or at a more advanced age, when their accomplishments and charms render them desirable investments. The engagement is never made life-long, for once past the flower of their youth the poor creatures would be mere burthens upon their masters; a courtesan is usually bought until she shall have reached the age of twenty-seven, after which she becomes her own property. Singers remain longer in harness, but even they rarely work after the age of thirty, for Japanese women, like Italians, age quickly, and have none of that intermediate stage between youth and old age, which seems to be confined to countries where there is a twilight.

Children destined to be trained as singers are usually bought when they are five or six years old, a likely child fetching from about thirty-five to fifty shillings; the purchaser undertakes the education of his charge, and brings the little thing up as his own child. The parents sign a paper absolving him from all responsibility in case of sickness or accident; but they know that their child will be well treated and cared for, the interests of the buyer being their material guarantee. Girls of fifteen or upwards who are sufficiently accomplished to join a company of singers

fetch ten times the price paid for children; for in their case there is no risk and no expense of education.

Little children who are bought for purposes of prostitution at the age of five or six years fetch about the same price as those that are bought to be singers. During their novitiate they are employed to wait upon the *Oiran*, or fashionable courtesans, in the capacity of little female pages (*Kamuro*). They are mostly the children of distressed persons, or orphans, whom their relatives cruelly sell rather than be at the expense and trouble of bringing them up. Of the girls who enter the profession later in life, some are orphans, who have no other means of earning a livelihood; others sell their bodies out of filial piety, that they may succour their sick or needy parents; others are married women, who enter the Yoshiwara to supply the wants of their husbands; and a very small proportion is recruited from girls who have been seduced and abandoned, perhaps sold, by faithless lovers.

The time to see the Yoshiwara to the best advantage is just after nightfall, when the lamps are lighted. Then it is that the women—who for the last two hours have been engaged in gilding their lips and painting their eyebrows black, and their throats and bosoms a snowy white, carefully leaving three brown Vandyke-collar points where the back of the head joins the neck, in accordance with one of the strictest rules of Japanese cosmetic science—leave the back

rooms, and take their places, side by side, in a kind of long narrow cage, the wooden bars of which open on to the public thoroughfare. Here they sit for hours, gorgeous in dresses of silk and gold and silver embroidery, speechless and motionless as wax figures, until they shall have attracted the attention of some of the passers-by, who begin to throng the place. At Yokohama indeed, and at the other open ports, the women of the Yoshiwara are loud in their invitations to visitors, frequently relieving the monotony of their own language by some blasphemous term of endearment picked up from British and American seamen; but in the Flower District at Yedo, and wherever Japanese customs are untainted, the utmost decorum prevails. Although the shape which vice takes is ugly enough, still it has this merit, that it is unobtrusive. Never need the pure be contaminated by contact with the impure; he who goes to the Yoshiwara, goes there knowing full well what he will find, but the virtuous man may live through his life without having this kind of vice forced upon his sight. Here again do the open ports contrast unfavourably with other places: Yokohama at night is as leprous a place as the London Haymarket.[1]

[1] Those who are interested in this branch of social science, will find much curious information upon the subject of prostitution in Japan in a pamphlet published at Yokohama, by Dr. Newton, R.N., a philanthropist who has been engaged for the last two years in establishing a Lock Hospital at that place. In spite of much opposition, from prejudice and ignorance, his labours have been crowned by great success.

A public woman or singer on entering her profession assumes a *nom de guerre*, by which she is known until her engagement is at an end. Some of these names are so pretty and quaint that I will take a few specimens from the *Yoshiwara Saiken*, the guide-book upon which this notice is based. 'Little Pine,' 'Little Butterfly,' 'Brightness of the Flowers,' 'The Jewel River,' 'Gold Mountain,' 'Pearl Harp,' 'The Stork that lives a Thousand Years,' 'Village of Flowers,' 'Sea Beach,' 'The Little Dragon,' 'Little Purple,' 'Silver,' 'Chrysanthemum,' 'Waterfall,' 'White Brightness,' 'Forest of Cherries,'—these and a host of other quaint conceits are the one prettiness of a very foul place.

KAZUMA'S REVENGE.

It is a law that he who lives by the sword shall die by the sword. In Japan, where there exists a large armed class over whom there is practically little or no control, party and clan broils, and single quarrels ending in bloodshed and death, are matters of daily occurrence; and it has been observed that Edinburgh in the olden time, when the clansmen, roistering through the streets at night, would pass from high words to deadly blows, is perhaps the best European parallel of modern Yedo or Kiôto.

It follows that of all his possessions the Samurai sets most store by his sword, his constant companion, his ally, defensive and offensive. The price of a sword by a famous maker reaches a high sum: a Japanese noble will sometimes be found girding on a sword, the blade of which unmounted is worth from six hundred to a thousand riyos, say from £200 to £300, and the mounting, rich in cunning metal work, will be of proportionate value. These swords are handed down as

FORGING THE SWORD.

heirlooms from father to son, and become almost a part of the wearer's own self. Iyéyasu, the founder of the last dynasty of Shoguns, wrote in his Legacy,[1] a code of rules drawn up for the guidance of his successors and their advisers in the government, "The girded sword is the living soul of the Samurai. In the case of a Samurai forgetting his sword, act as is appointed: it may not be overlooked."

The occupation of a swordsmith is an honourable profession, the members of which are men of gentle blood. In a country where trade is looked down upon as degrading, it is strange to find this single exception to the general rule. The traditions of the craft are many and curious. During the most critical moment of the forging of the sword, when the steel edge is being welded into the body of the iron blade, it is a custom which still obtains among old-fashioned armourers to put on the cap and robes worn by the Kugé, or nobles of the Mikado's court, and, closing the doors of the workshop, to labour in secrecy and freedom from interruption, the half gloom adding to the mystery of the operation. Sometimes the occasion is even invested with a certain sanctity, a tasselled cord of straw, such as is hung before the shrines of the Kami, or native gods of Japan, being suspended

[1] The Legacy of Iyéyasu, translated by F. Lowder. Yokohama, 1868. (Printed for private circulation.)

between two bamboo poles in the forge, which for the nonce is converted into a holy altar.

At Osaka, I lived opposite to one Kusano Yoshiaki, a swordsmith, a most intelligent and amiable gentleman, who was famous throughout his neighbourhood for his good and charitable deeds. His idea was that, having been bred up to a calling which trades in life and death, he was bound, so far as in him lay, to atone for this by seeking to alleviate the suffering which is in the world; and he carried out his principle to the extent of impoverishing himself. No neighbour ever appealed to him in vain for help in tending the sick or burying the dead. No beggar or lazar was ever turned from his door without receiving some mark of his bounty, whether in money or in kind. Nor was his scrupulous honesty less remarkable than his charity. While other smiths are in the habit of earning large sums of money by counterfeiting the marks of the famous makers of old, he was able to boast that he had never turned out a weapon which bore any other mark than his own. From his father and his forefathers he inherited his trade, which, in his turn, he will hand over to his son—a hard-working, honest, and sturdy man, the clank of whose hammer and anvil may be heard from daybreak to sundown.

The trenchant edge of the Japanese sword is notorious. It is said that the best blades will in the hands of an expert

swordsman cut through the dead bodies of three men, laid one upon the other, at a blow. The swords of the Shogun used to be tried upon the corpses of executed criminals; the public headsman was entrusted with the duty, and for a "nose medicine," or bribe of two bus (about three shillings), would substitute the weapon of a private individual for that of his Lord. Dogs and beggars, lying helpless by the roadside, not unfrequently serve to test a ruffian's sword; but the executioner earns many a fee from those who wish to see how their blades will cut off a head.

The statesman who shall enact a law forbidding the carrying of this deadly weapon will indeed have deserved well of his country; but it will be a difficult task to undertake, and a dangerous one. I would not give much for that man's life. The hand of every swashbuckler in the empire would be against him. One day as we were talking over this and other kindred subjects, a friend of mine, a man of advanced and liberal views, wrote down his opinion, *more Japonico*, in a verse of poetry which ran as follows:—"I would that all the swords and dirks in the country might be collected in one place and molten down, and that, from the metal so produced, one huge sword might be forged, which, being the only blade left, should be the girded sword of Great Japan."

The following history is in more senses than one a "Tale of a Sword."

About two hundred and fifty years ago Ikéda Kunaishôyu was Lord of the Province of Inaba. Among his retainers were two gentlemen, named Watanabé Yukiyé and Kawai Matazayémon, who were bound together by strong ties of friendship, and were in the habit of frequently visiting at one another's houses. One day Yukiyé was sitting conversing with Matazayémon in the house of the latter, when, on a sudden, a sword that was lying in the raised part of the room caught his eye. As he saw it, he started and said—

"Pray tell me, how came you by that sword?"

"Well, as you know, when my Lord Ikéda followed my Lord Tokugawa Iyéyasu to fight at Nagakudé, my father went in his train; and it was at the battle of Nagakudé that he picked up this sword."

"My father went too, and was killed in the fight, and this sword, which was an heirloom in our family for many generations, was lost at that time. As it is of great value in my eyes, I do wish that, if you set no special store by it, you would have the great kindness to return it to me."

"That is a very easy matter, and no more than what one friend should do by another. Pray take it."

Upon this Yukiyé gratefully took the sword, and having carried it home put it carefully away.

At the beginning of the ensuing year Matazayémon fell sick and died, and Yukiyé, mourning bitterly for the loss of

his good friend, and anxious to requite the favour which he had received in the matter of his father's sword, did many acts of kindness to the dead man's son—a young man twenty-two years of age, named Matagorô.

Now this Matagorô was a base-hearted cur, who had begrudged the sword that his father had given to Yukiyé, and complained publicly and often that Yukiyé had never made any present in return; and in this way Yukiyé got a bad name in my Lord's palace as a stingy and illiberal man.

But Yukiyé had a son, called Kazuma, a youth sixteen years of age, who served as one of the Prince's pages of honour. One evening, as he and one of his brother pages were talking together, the latter said—

"Matagorô is telling everybody that your father accepted a handsome sword from him and never made him any present in return, and people are beginning to gossip about it."

"Indeed," replied the other, "my father received that sword from Matagorô's father as a mark of friendship and goodwill, and, considering that it would be an insult to send a present of money in return, thought to return the favour by acts of kindness towards Matagorô. I suppose it is money he wants."

When Kazuma's service was over, he returned home, and went to his father's room to tell him the report that was being spread in the palace, and begged him to send an ample

present of money to Matagorô. Yukiyé reflected for a while, and said—

"You are too young to understand the right line of conduct in such matters. Matagorô's father and myself were very close friends; so, seeing that he had ungrudgingly given me back the sword of my ancestors, I, thinking to requite his kindness at his death, rendered important services to Matagorô. It would be easy to finish the matter by sending a present of money; but I had rather take the sword and return it than be under an obligation to this mean churl, who knows not the laws which regulate the intercourse and dealings of men of gentle blood."

So Yukiyé, in his anger, took the sword to Matagorô's house, and said to him—

"I have come to your house this night for no other purpose than to restore to you the sword which your father gave me;" and with this he placed the sword before Matagorô.

"Indeed," replied the other, "I trust that you will not pain me by returning a present which my father made you."

"Amongst men of gentle birth," said Yukiyé, laughing scornfully, "it is the custom to requite presents, in the first place by kindness, and afterwards by a suitable gift offered with a free heart. But it is no use talking to such as you, who are ignorant of the first principles of good breeding; so I have the honour to give you back the sword."

MATAGORÔ KILLS YUKIYÉ.

As Yukiyé went on bitterly to reprove Matagorô, the latter waxed very wroth, and, being a ruffian, would have killed Yukiyé on the spot; but he, old man as he was, was a skilful swordsman, so Matagorô, craven-like, determined to wait until he could attack him unawares. Little suspecting any treachery, Yukiyé started to return home, and Matagorô, under the pretence of attending him to the door, came behind him with his sword drawn and cut him in the shoulder. The older man, turning round, drew and defended himself; but having received a severe wound in the first instance, he fainted away from loss of blood, and Matagorô slew him.

The mother of Matagorô, startled by the noise, came out; and when she saw what had been done, she was afraid, and said—

"Passionate man! what have you done? You are a murderer; and now your life will be forfeit. What terrible deed is this!"

"I have killed him now, and there's nothing to be done. Come, mother, before the matter becomes known, let us fly together from this house."

"I will follow you; do you go and seek out my Lord Abé Shirogorô, a chief among the Hatamotos,[1] who was my foster-

[1] *Hatamotos.* The Hatamotos were the feudatory nobles of the Shogun or Tycoon. The office of Taikun having been abolished, the Hatamotos no longer exist. For further information respecting them, see the note at the end of this story.

child. You had better fly to him for protection, and remain in hiding."

So the old woman persuaded her son to make his escape, and sent him to the palace of Shirogorô.

Now it happened that at this time the Hatamotos had formed themselves into a league against the powerful Daimios; and Abé Shirogorô, with two other noblemen, named Kondô Noborinosuké and Midzuno Jiurozayémon, was at the head of the league. It followed, as a matter of course, that his forces were frequently recruited by vicious men, who had no means of gaining their living, and whom he received and entreated kindly without asking any questions as to their antecedents; how much the more then, on being applied to for an asylum by the son of his own foster-mother, did he willingly extend his patronage to him, and guarantee him against all danger. So he called a meeting of the principal Hatamotos, and introduced Matagorô to them, saying—

"This man is a retainer of Ikéda Kunaishôyu, who, having cause of hatred against a man named Watanabé Yukiyé, has slain him, and has fled to me for protection; this man's mother suckled me when I was an infant, and, right or wrong, I will befriend him. If, therefore, Ikéda Kunaishôyu should send to require me to deliver him up, I trust that you will one and all put forth your strength and help me to defend him."

"Ay! that will we, with pleasure!" replied Kondô Noborinosuké. "We have for some time had cause to complain of the scorn with which the Daimios have treated us. Let Ikéda Kunaishôyu send to claim this man, and we will show him the power of the Hatamotos."

All the other Hatamotos, with one accord, applauded this determination, and made ready their force for an armed resistance, should my Lord Kunaishôyu send to demand the surrender of Matagorô. But the latter remained as a welcome guest in the house of Abé Shirogorô.

Now when Watanabé Kazuma saw that, as the night advanced, his father Yukiyé did not return home, he became anxious, and went to the house of Matagorô to seek for him, and finding to his horror that he was murdered, fell upon the corpse and embraced it, weeping. On a sudden, it flashed across him that this must assuredly be the handiwork of Matagorô; so he rushed furiously into the house, determined to kill his father's murderer upon the spot. But Matagorô had already fled, and he found only the mother, who was making her preparations for following her son to the house of Abé Shirogorô: so he bound the old woman, and searched all over the house for her son; but, seeing that his search was fruitless, he carried off the mother, and handed her over to one of the elders of the clan, at the same time laying information against Matagorô as his father's murderer. When the

affair was reported to the Prince, he was very angry, and ordered that the old woman should remain bound and be cast into prison until the whereabouts of her son should be discovered. Then Kazuma buried his father's corpse with great pomp, and the widow and the orphan mourned over their loss.

It soon became known amongst the people of Abé Shirogorô that the mother of Matagorô had been imprisoned for her son's crime, and they immediately set about planning her rescue; so they sent to the palace of my Lord Kunaishôyu a messenger, who, when he was introduced to the councillor of the Prince, said—

"We have heard that, in consequence of the murder of Yukiyé, my lord has been pleased to imprison the mother of Matagorô. Our master Shirogorô has arrested the criminal, and will deliver him up to you. But the mother has committed no crime, so we pray that she may be released from a cruel imprisonment: she was the foster-mother of our master, and he would fain intercede to save her life. Should you consent to this, we, on our side, will give up the murderer, and hand him over to you in front of our master's gate to-morrow."

The councillor repeated this message to the Prince, who, in his pleasure at being able to give Kazuma his revenge on the morrow, immediately agreed to the proposal, and the

messenger returned triumphant at the success of the scheme. On the following day, the Prince ordered the mother of Matagorô to be placed in a litter and carried to the Hatamoto's dwelling, in charge of a retainer named Sasawo Danyémon, who, when he arrived at the door of Abé Shirogorô's house, said—

"I am charged to hand over to you the mother of Matagorô, and, in exchange, I am authorized to receive her son at your hands."

"We will immediately give him up to you; but, as the mother and son are now about to bid an eternal farewell to one another, we beg you to be so kind as to tarry a little."

With this the retainers of Shirogorô led the old woman inside their master's house, and Sasawo Danyémon remained waiting outside, until at last he grew impatient, and ventured to hurry on the people within.

"We return you many thanks," replied they, "for your kindness in bringing us the mother; but, as the son cannot go with you at present, you had better return home as quickly as possible. We are afraid we have put you to much trouble." And so they mocked him.

When Danyémon saw that he had not only been cheated into giving up the old woman, but was being made a laughing-stock of into the bargain, he flew into a great rage, and

thought to break into the house and seize Matagorô and his mother by force; but, peeping into the courtyard, he saw that it was filled with Hatamotos, carrying guns and naked swords. Not caring then to die fighting a hopeless battle, and at the same time feeling that, after having been so cheated, he would be put to shame before his lord, Sasawo Danyémon went to the burial-place of his ancestors, and disembowelled himself in front of their graves.

When the Prince heard how his messenger had been treated, he was indignant, and summoning his councillors resolved, although he was suffering from sickness, to collect his retainers and attack Abé Shirogorô; and the other chief Daimios, when the matter became publicly known, took up the cause, and determined that the Hatamotos must be chastised for their insolence. On their side, the Hatamotos put forth all their efforts to resist the Daimios. So Yedo became disturbed, and the riotous state of the city caused great anxiety to the Government, who took counsel together how they might restore peace. As the Hatamotos were directly under the orders of the Shogun, it was no difficult matter to put them down: the hard question to solve was how to put a restraint upon the great Daimios. However, one of the Gorôjiu,[1] named Matsudaira Idzu no Kami, a

[1] The first Council of the Shogun's ministers; literally, "assembly of imperial elders."

THE DEATH OF DANYÉMON.

man of great intelligence, hit upon a plan by which he might secure this end.

There was at this time in the service of the Shogun a physician, named Nakarai Tsusen, who was in the habit of frequenting the palace of my Lord Kunaishôyu, and who for some time past had been treating him for the disease from which he was suffering. Idzu no Kami sent secretly for this physician, and, summoning him to his private room, engaged him in conversation, in the midst of which he suddenly dropped his voice and said to him in a whisper—

"Listen, Tsusen. You have received great favours at the hands of the Shogun. The Government is now sorely straitened: are you willing to carry your loyalty so far as to lay down your life on its behalf?"

"Ay, my lord; for generations my forefathers have held their property by the grace of the Shogun. I am willing this night to lay down my life for my Prince, as a faithful vassal should."

"Well, then, I will tell you. The great Daimios and the Hatamotos have fallen out about this affair of Matagorô, and lately it has seemed as if they meant to come to blows. The country will be agitated, and the farmers and townsfolk suffer great misery, if we cannot quell the tumult. The Hatamotos will be easily kept under, but it will be no light task to pacify the great Daimios. If you are willing to lay

down your life in carrying out a stratagem of mine, peace will be restored to the country; but your loyalty will be your death."

"I am ready to sacrifice my life in this service."

"This is my plan. You have been attending my Lord Kunaishôyu in his sickness; to-morrow you must go to see him, and put poison in his physic. If we can kill him, the agitation will cease. This is the service which I ask of you."

Tsusen agreed to undertake the deed; and on the following day, when he went to see Kunaishôyu, he carried with him poisoned drugs. Half the draught he drank himself,[1] and thus put the Prince off his guard, so that he swallowed the remainder fearlessly. Tsusen, seeing this, hurried away, and as he was carried home in his litter the death-agony seized him, and he died, vomiting blood.

My Lord Kunaishôyu died in the same way in great torture, and in the confusion attending upon his death and funeral ceremonies the struggle which was impending with the Hatamotos was delayed.

In the meanwhile the Gorôjiu Idzu no Kami summoned the three leaders of the Hatamotos and addressed them as follows:—

[1] A physician attending a personage of exalted rank has always to drink half the potion he prescribes as a test of his good faith.

"The secret plottings and treasonable, turbulent conduct of you three men, so unbecoming your position as Hatamotos, have enraged my lord the Shogun to such a degree, that he has been pleased to order that you be imprisoned in a temple, and that your patrimony be given over to your next heirs."

Accordingly the three Hatamotos, after having been severely admonished, were confined in a temple called Kanyeiji; and the remaining Hatamotos, scared by this example, dispersed in peace. As for the great Daimios, inasmuch as after the death of my Lord Kunaishôyu the Hatamotos were all dispersed, there was no enemy left for them to fight with; so the tumult was quelled, and peace was restored.

Thus it happened that Matagorô lost his patron; so, taking his mother with him, he went and placed himself under the protection of an old man named Sakurai Jiuzayémon. This old man was a famous teacher of lance exercise, and enjoyed both wealth and honour; so he took in Matagorô, and having engaged as a guard thirty Rônins, all resolute fellows and well skilled in the arts of war, they all fled together to a distant place called Sagara.

All this time Watanabé Kazuma had been brooding over his father's death, and thinking how he should be revenged upon the murderer; so when my Lord Kunaishôyu suddenly died, he went to the young Prince who succeeded him and

obtained leave of absence to go and seek out his father's enemy. Now Kazuma's elder sister was married to a man named Araki Matayémon, who at that time was famous as the first swordsman in Japan. As Kazuma was but sixteen years of age, this Matayémon, taking into consideration his near relationship as son-in-law to the murdered man, determined to go forth with the lad, as his guardian, and help him to seek out Matagorô; and two of Matayémon's retainers, named Ishidomé Busuké and Ikezoyé Magohachi, made up their minds, at all hazards, to follow their master. The latter, when he heard their intention, thanked them, but refused the offer, saying that as he was now about to engage in a vendetta in which his life would be continually in jeopardy, and as it would be a lasting grief to him should either of them receive a wound in such a service, he must beg them to renounce their intention; but they answered—

"Master, this is a cruel speech of yours. All these years have we received nought but kindness and favours at your hands; and now that you are engaged in the pursuit of this murderer, we desire to follow you, and, if needs must, to lay down our lives in your service. Furthermore, we have heard that the friends of this Matagorô are no fewer than thirty-six men; so, however bravely you may fight, you will be in peril from the superior numbers of your enemy. However, if you are pleased to persist in your refusal to take us, we

have made up our minds that there is no resource for us but to disembowel ourselves on the spot."

When Matayémon and Kazuma heard these words, they wondered at these faithful and brave men, and were moved to tears. Then Matayémon said—

"The kindness of you two brave fellows is without precedent. Well, then, I will accept your services gratefully."

Then the two men, having obtained their wish, cheerfully followed their master; and the four set out together upon their journey to seek out Matagorô, of whose whereabouts they were completely ignorant.

Matagorô in the meanwhile had made his way, with the old man Sakurai Jiuzayémon and his thirty Rônins, to Osaka. But, strong as they were in numbers, they travelled in great secrecy. The reason for this was, that the old man's younger brother, Sakurai Jinsuké, a fencing-master by profession, had once had a fencing-match with Matayémon, Kazuma's brother-in-law, and had been shamefully beaten; so that the party were greatly afraid of Matayémon, and felt that, since he was taking up Kazuma's cause and acting as his guardian, they might be worsted in spite of their numbers: so they went on their way with great caution, and, having reached Osaka, put up at an inn in a quarter called Ikutama, and hid from Kazuma and Matayémon.

The latter also in good time reached Osaka, and spared no

pains to seek out Matagorô. One evening towards dusk, as Matayémon was walking in the quarter where the enemy were staying, he saw a man, dressed as a gentleman's servant, enter a cook-shop and order some buckwheat porridge for thirty-six men, and, looking attentively at the man, he recognized him as the servant of Sakurai Jiuzayémon; so he hid himself in a dark place and watched, and heard the fellow say—

"My master, Sakurai Jiuzayémon, is about to start for Sagara to-morrow morning, to return thanks to the gods for his recovery from a sickness from which he has been suffering; so I am in a great hurry."

With these words the servant hastened away; and Matayémon, entering the shop, called for some porridge, and as he ate it, made some inquiries as to the man who had just given so large an order for buckwheat porridge. The master of the shop answered that he was the attendant of a party of thirty-six gentlemen who were staying at such and such an inn. Then Matayémon, having found out all that he wanted to know, went home and told Kazuma, who was delighted at the prospect of carrying his revenge into execution on the morrow. That same evening Matayémon sent one of his two faithful retainers as a spy to the inn, to find out at what hour Matagorô was to set out on the following morning; and he ascertained from the servants of the inn, that the party

was to start at daybreak for Sagara, stopping at Isé to worship at the shrine of Tershô Daijin.[1]

Matayémon made his preparations accordingly, and, with Kazuma and his two retainers, started before dawn. Beyond Uyéno, in the province of Iga, the castle town of the Daimio Tôdô Idzumi no Kami, there is a wide and lonely moor; and this was the place upon which they fixed for the attack upon the enemy. When they had arrived at the spot, Matayémon went into a tea-house by the roadside, and wrote a petition to the governor of the Daimio's castle town for permission to carry out the vendetta within its precincts;[2] then he addressed Kazuma, and said—

"When we fall in with Matagorô and begin the fight, do you engage and slay your father's murderer; attack him and him only, and I will keep off his guard of Rônins;" then turning to his two retainers, "As for you, keep close to Kazuma; and should the Rônins attempt to rescue Matagorô,

[1] Goddess of the sun, and ancestress of the Mikados.

[2] "In respect to revenging injury done to master or father, it is granted by the wise and virtuous (Confucius) that you and the injurer cannot live together under the canopy of heaven.

"A person harbouring such vengeance shall notify the same in writing to the Criminal Court; and although no check or hindrance may be offered to his carrying out his desire within the period allowed for that purpose, it is forbidden that the chastisement of an enemy be attended with riot.

"Fellows who neglect to give notice of their intended revenge are like wolves of pretext, and their punishment or pardon should depend upon the circumstances of the case."—*Legacy of Iyéyasu*, ut suprà.

it will be your duty to prevent them, and succour Kazuma." And having further laid down each man's duties with great minuteness, they lay in wait for the arrival of the enemy. Whilst they were resting in the tea-house, the governor of the castle town arrived, and, asking for Matayémon, said—

"I have the honour to be the governor of the castle town of Tôdô Idzumi no Kami. My lord, having learnt your intention of slaying your enemy within the precincts of his citadel, gives his consent; and as a proof of his admiration of your fidelity and valour, he has further sent you a detachment of infantry, one hundred strong, to guard the place; so that should any of the thirty-six men attempt to escape, you may set your mind at ease, for flight will be impossible."

When Matayémon and Kazuma had expressed their thanks for his lordship's gracious kindness, the governor took his leave and returned home. At last the enemy's train was seen in the distance. First came Sakurai Jiuzayémon and his younger brother Jinsuké; and next to them followed Kawai Matagorô and Takénouchi Gentan. These four men, who were the bravest and the foremost of the band of Rônins, were riding on pack-horses, and the remainder were marching on foot, keeping close together.

As they drew near, Kazuma, who was impatient to avenge

his father, stepped boldly forward and shouted in a loud voice—

"Here stand I, Kazuma, the son of Yukiyé, whom you, Matagorô, treacherously slew, determined to avenge my father's death. Come forth, then, and do battle with me, and let us see which of us twain is the better man."

And before the Rônins had recovered from their astonishment, Matayémon said—

"I, Araké Matayémon, the son-in-law of Yukiyé, have come to second Kazuma in his deed of vengeance. Win or lose, you must give us battle."

When the thirty-six men heard the name of Matayémon, they were greatly afraid; but Sakurai Jiuzayémon urged them to be upon their guard, and leaped from his horse; and Matayémon, springing forward with his drawn sword, cleft him from the shoulder to the nipple of his breast, so that he fell dead. Sakurai Jinsuké, seeing his brother killed before his eyes, grew furious, and shot an arrow at Matayémon, who deftly cut the shaft in two with his dirk as it flew; and Jinsuké, amazed at this feat, threw away his bow and attacked Matayémon, who, with his sword in his right hand and his dirk in his left, fought with desperation. The other Rônins attempted to rescue Jinsuké, and, in the struggle, Kazuma, who had engaged Matagorô, became separated from Matayémon, whose two retainers, Busuké and Magohachi, bearing

in mind their master's orders, killed five Rônins who had attacked Kazuma, but were themselves badly wounded. In the meantime, Matayémon, who had killed seven of the Rônins, and who the harder he was pressed the more bravely he fought, soon cut down three more, and the remainder dared not approach him. At this moment there came up one Kanô Tozayémon, a retainer of the lord of the castle town, and an old friend of Matayémon, who, when he heard that Matayémon was this day about to avenge his father-in-law, had seized his spear and set out, for the sake of the old goodwill between them, to help him, and act as his second, and said—

"Sir Matayémon, hearing of the perilous adventure in which you have engaged, I have come out to offer myself as your second."

Matayémon, hearing this, was rejoiced, and fought with renewed vigour. Then one of the Rônins, named Takénouchi Gentan, a very brave man, leaving his companions to do battle with Matayémon, came to the rescue of Matagorô, who was being hotly pressed by Kazuma, and, in attempting to prevent this, Busuké fell covered with wounds. His companion Magohachi, seeing him fall, was in great anxiety; for should any harm happen to Kazuma, what excuse could he make to Matayémon? So, wounded as he was, he too engaged Takénouchi Gentan, and, being crippled by the gashes he had

received, was in deadly peril. Then the man who had come up from the castle town to act as Matayémon's second cried out—

"See there, Sir Matayémon, your follower who is fighting with Gentan is in great danger. Do you go to his rescue, and second Sir Kazuma: I will give an account of the others!"

"Great thanks to you, sir. I will go and second Kazuma."

So Matayémon went to help Kazuma, whilst his second and the infantry soldiers kept back the surviving Rônins, who, already wearied by their fight with Matayémon, were unfit for any further exertion. Kazuma meanwhile was still fighting with Matagorô, and the issue of the conflict was doubtful; and Takénouchi Gentan, in his attempt to rescue Matagorô, was being kept at bay by Magohachi, who, weakened by his wounds, and blinded by the blood which was streaming into his eyes from a cut in the forehead, had given himself up for lost when Matayémon came and cried—

"Be of good cheer, Magohachi; it is I, Matayémon, who have come to the rescue. You are badly hurt; get out of harm's way, and rest yourself."

Then Magohachi, who until then had been kept up by his anxiety for Kazuma's safety, gave in, and fell fainting from loss of blood; and Matayémon worsted and slew Gentan; and even then, although he had received two

wounds, he was not exhausted, but drew near to Kazuma and said—

"Courage, Kazuma! The Rônins are all killed, and there now remains only Matagorô, your father's murderer. Fight and win!"

The youth, thus encouraged, redoubled his efforts; but Matagorô, losing heart, quailed and fell. So Kazuma's vengeance was fulfilled, and the desire of his heart was accomplished.

The two faithful retainers, who had died in their loyalty, were buried with great ceremony, and Kazuma carried the head of Matagorô and piously laid it upon his father's tomb.

So ends the tale of Kazuma's revenge.

I fear that stories of which killing and bloodshed form the principal features can hardly enlist much sympathy in these peaceful days. Still, when such tales are based upon history, they are interesting to students of social phenomena. The story of Kazuma's revenge is mixed up with events which at the present time are peculiarly significant: I mean the feud between the great Daimios and the Hatamotos. Those who have followed the modern history of

Japan will see that the recent struggle, which has ended in the ruin of the Tycoon's power and the abolition of his office, was the outburst of a hidden fire which had been smouldering for centuries. But the repressive might had been gradually weakened, and contact with Western powers had rendered still more odious a feudality which men felt to be out of date. The revolution which has ended in the triumph of the Daimios over the Tycoon, is also the triumph of the vassal over his feudal lord, and is the harbinger of political life to the people at large. In the time of Iyéyasu the burden might be hateful, but it had to be borne; and so it would have been to this day, had not circumstances from without broken the spell. The Japanese Daimio, in advocating the isolation of his country, was hugging the very yoke which he hated. Strange to say, however, there are still men who, while they embrace the new political creed, yet praise the past, and look back with regret upon the day when Japan stood alone, without part or share in the great family of nations.

NOTE.—*Hatamoto.* This word means "*under the flag.*" The Hatamotos were men who, as their name implied, rallied round the standard of the Shogun, or Tycoon, in war-time. They were eighty thousand in number. When Iyéyasu left the Province of Mikawa and became Shogun, the retainers whom he ennobled, and who received from him grants of land yielding revenue to

the amount of ten thousand kokus of rice a year, and from that down to one hundred kokus, were called *Hatamoto*. In return for these grants of land, the Hatamotos had in war-time to furnish a contingent of soldiers in proportion to their revenue. For every thousand kokus of rice five men were required. Those Hatamotos whose revenue fell short of a thousand kokus substituted a quota of money. In time of peace most of the minor offices of the Tycoon's government were filled by Hatamotos, the more important places being held by the Fudai, or vassal Daimios of the Shogun. Seven years ago, in imitation of the customs of foreign nations, a standing army was founded; and then the Hatamotos had to contribute their quota of men or of money, whether the country were at peace or at war. When the Shogun was reduced in 1868 to the rank of a simple Daimio, his revenue of eight million kokus reverted to the Government, with the exception of seven hundred thousand kokus. The title of Hatamoto exists no more, and those who until a few months ago held the rank are for the most part ruined or dispersed. From having been perhaps the proudest and most overbearing class in Japan, they are driven to the utmost straits of poverty. Some have gone into trade, with the heirlooms of their families as their stock; others are wandering through the country as Rônins; while a small minority have been allowed to follow the fallen fortunes of their master's family, the present chief of which is known as the Prince of Tokugawa. Thus are the eighty thousand dispersed.

The koku of rice, in which all revenue is calculated, is of varying value. At the cheapest it is worth rather more than a pound sterling, and sometimes almost three times as much. The salaries of officials being paid in rice, it follows that there is a large and influential class throughout the country who are interested

in keeping up the price of the staple article of food. Hence the opposition with which a free trade in rice has met, even in famine times. Hence also the frequent so-called "Rice Riots."

The amounts at which the lands formerly held by the chief Daimios, but now patriotically given up by them to the Mikado, were assessed, sound fabulous. The Prince of Kaga alone had an income of more than one million two hundred thousand kokus. Yet these great proprietors were, latterly at least, embarrassed men. They had many thousand mouths to feed, and were mulcted of their dues right and left; while their mania for buying foreign ships and munitions of war, often at exorbitant prices, had plunged them heavily in debt.

A STORY OF THE OTOKODATÉ OF YEDO;

BEING THE SUPPLEMENT OF

THE STORY OF GOMPACHI AND KOMURASAKI.

THE word Otokodaté occurs several times in these Tales; and as I cannot convey its full meaning by a simple translation, I must preserve it in the text, explaining it by the following note, taken from the Japanese of a native scholar.

The Otokodaté were friendly associations of brave men bound together by an obligation to stand by one another in weal or in woe, regardless of their own lives, and without inquiring into one another's antecedents. A bad man, however, having joined the Otokodaté must forsake his evil ways; for their principle was to treat the oppressor as an enemy, and to help the feeble as a father does his child. If they had money, they gave it to those that had none, and their charitable deeds won for them the respect of all men. The head of the society was called its "Father;" if any of the others, who were his apprentices, were homeless, they lived with the

Father and served him, paying him at the same time a small fee, in consideration of which, if they fell sick or into misfortune, he took charge of them and assisted them.

The Father of the Otokodaté pursued the calling of farming out coolies to the Daimios and great personages for their journeys to and from Yedo, and in return for this received from them rations in rice. He had more influence with the lower classes even than the officials; and if the coolies had struck work or refused to accompany a Daimio on his journey, a word from the Father would produce as many men as might be required. When Prince Tokugawa Iyémochi, the last but one of the Shoguns, left Yedo for Kiyôto, one Shimmon Tatsugorô, chief of the Otokodaté, undertook the management of his journey, and some three or four years ago was raised to the dignity of Hatamoto for many faithful services. After the battle of Fushimi, and the abolition of the Shogunate, he accompanied the last of the Shoguns in his retirement.

In old days there were also Otokodaté among the Hatamotos; this was after the civil wars of the time of Iyéyasu, when, though the country was at peace, the minds of men were still in a state of high excitement, and could not be reconciled to the dulness of a state of rest; it followed that broils and faction fights were continually taking place among the young men of the Samurai class, and that those who

distinguished themselves by their personal strength and valour were looked up to as captains. Leagues after the manner of those existing among the German students were formed in different quarters of the city, under various names, and used to fight for the honour of victory. When the country became more thoroughly tranquil, the custom of forming these leagues amongst gentlemen fell into disuse.

The past tense is used in speaking even of the Otokodaté of the lower classes; for although they nominally exist, they have no longer the power and importance which they enjoyed at the time to which these stories belong. They then, like the 'prentices of Old London, played a considerable part in the society of the great cities, and that man was lucky, were he gentle Samurai or simple wardsman, who could claim the Father of the Otokodaté for his friend.

The word, taken by itself, means a manly or plucky fellow.

Chôbei of Bandzuin was the chief of the Otokodaté of Yedo. He was originally called Itarô, and was the son of a certain Rônin who lived in the country. One day, when he was only ten years of age, he went out with a playfellow to bathe in the river; and as the two were playing they quarrelled over their game, and Itarô, seizing the other boy, threw him into the river and drowned him.

Then he went home, and said to his father—

"I went to play by the river to-day, with a friend; and as he was rude to me, I threw him into the water and killed him."

When his father heard him speak thus, quite calmly, as if nothing had happened, he was thunderstruck, and said—

"This is indeed a fearful thing. Child as you are, you will have to pay the penalty of your deed; so to-night you must fly to Yedo in secret, and take service with some noble Samurai, and perhaps in time you may become a soldier yourself."

With these words he gave him twenty ounces of silver and a fine sword, made by the famous swordsmith Rai Kunitoshi, and sent him out of the province with all despatch. The following morning the parents of the murdered child came to claim that Itarô should be given up to their vengeance; but it was too late, and all they could do was to bury their child and mourn for his loss.

Itarô made his way to Yedo in hot haste, and there found employment as a shop-boy; but soon tiring of that sort of life, and burning to become a soldier, he found means at last to enter the service of a certain Hatamoto called Sakurai Shôzayémon, and changed his name to Tsunéhei. Now this Sakurai Shôzayémon had a son, called Shônosuké, a young

man in his seventeenth year, who grew so fond of Tsunéhei that he took him with him wherever he went, and treated him in all ways as an equal.

When Shônosuké went to the fencing-school Tsunéhei would accompany him, and thus, as he was by nature strong and active, soon became a good swordsman.

One day, when Shôzayémon had gone out, his son Shônosuké said to Tsunéhei—

"You know how fond my father is of playing at football: it must be great sport. As he has gone out to-day, suppose you and I have a game?"

"That will be rare sport," answered Tsunéhei. "Let us make haste and play, before my lord comes home."

So the two boys went out into the garden, and began trying to kick the football; but, lacking skill, do what they would, they could not lift it from the ground. At last Shônosuké, with a vigorous kick, raised the football; but, having missed his aim, it went tumbling over the wall into the next garden, which belonged to one Hikosaka Zempachi, a teacher of lance exercise, who was known to be a surly, ill-tempered fellow.

"Oh, dear! what shall we do?" said Shônosuké. "We have lost my father's football in his absence; and if we go and ask for it back from that churlish neighbour of ours, we shall only be scolded and sworn at for our pains."

"Oh, never mind," answered Tsunéhei; "I will go and apologize for our carelessness, and get the football back."

"Well, but then you will be chidden, and I don't want that."

"Never mind me. Little care I for his cross words." So Tsunéhei went to the next-door house to reclaim the ball.

Now it so happened that Zempachi, the surly neighbour, had been walking in his garden whilst the two youths were playing; and as he was admiring the beauty of his favourite chrysanthemums, the football came flying over the wall and struck him full in the face. Zempachi, not used to anything but flattery and coaxing, flew into a violent rage at this; and while he was thinking how he would revenge himself upon any one who might be sent to ask for the lost ball, Tsunéhei came in, and said to one of Zempachi's servants—

"I am sorry to say that in my lord's absence I took his football, and, in trying to play with it, clumsily kicked it over your wall. I beg you to excuse my carelessness, and to be so good as to give me back the ball."

The servant went in and repeated this to Zempachi, who worked himself up into a great rage, and ordered Tsunéhei to be brought before him, and said—

"Here, fellow, is your name Tsunéhei?"

"Yes, sir, at your service. I am almost afraid to ask

pardon for my carelessness; but please forgive me, and let me have the ball."

"I thought your master, Shôzayémon, was to blame for this; but it seems that it was you who kicked the football."

"Yes, sir. I am sure I am very sorry for what I have done. Please, may I ask for the ball?" said Tsunehei, bowing humbly.

For a while Zempachi made no answer, but at length he said—

"Do you know, villain, that your dirty football struck me in the face? I ought, by rights, to kill you on the spot for this; but I will spare your life this time, so take your football and be off." And with that he went up to Tsunéhei and beat him, and kicked him in the head, and spat in his face.

Then Tsunéhei, who up to that time had demeaned himself very humbly, in his eagerness to get back the football, jumped up in a fury, and said—

"I made ample apologies to you for my carelessness, and now you have insulted and struck me. Ill-mannered ruffian! take back the ball,—I'll none of it;" and he drew his dirk, and cutting the football in two, threw it at Zempachi, and returned home.

But Zempachi, growing more and more angry, called one of his servants, and said to him—

"That fellow, Tsunéhei, has been most insolent: go next door and find out Shôzayémon, and tell him that I have ordered you to bring back Tsunéhei, that I may kill him."

So the servant went to deliver the message.

In the meantime Tsunéhei went back to his master's house; and when Shônosuké saw him, he said—

"Well, of course you have been ill treated; but did you get back the football?"

"When I went in, I made many apologies; but I was beaten, and kicked in the head, and treated with the greatest indignity. I would have killed that wretch, Zempachi, at once, but that I knew that, if I did so while I was yet a member of your household, I should bring trouble upon your family. For your sake I bore this ill-treatment patiently; but now I pray you let me take leave of you and become a Rônin, that I may be revenged upon this man."

"Think well what you are doing," answered Shônosuké. "After all, we have only lost a football; and my father will not care, nor upbraid us."

But Tsunéhei would not listen to him, and was bent upon wiping out the affront that he had received. As they were talking, the messenger arrived from Zempachi, demanding the surrender of Tsunéhei, on the ground that he had insulted him: to this Shônosuké replied that his father was away from home, and that in his absence he could do nothing.

At last Shôzayémon came home; and when he heard what had happened he was much grieved, and at a loss what to do, when a second messenger arrived from Zempachi, demanding that Tsunéhei should be given up without delay. Then Shôzayémon, seeing that the matter was serious, called the youth to him, and said—

"This Zempachi is heartless and cruel, and if you go to his house will assuredly kill you; take, therefore, these fifty riyos, and fly to Osaka or Kiyôto, where you may safely set up in business."

"Sir," answered Tsunéhei, with tears of gratitude for his lord's kindness, "from my heart I thank you for your great goodness; but I have been insulted and trampled upon, and, if I lay down my life in the attempt, I will repay Zempachi for what he has this day done."

"Well, then, since you needs must be revenged, go and fight, and may success attend you! Still, as much depends upon the blade you carry, and I fear yours is likely to be but a sorry weapon, I will give you a sword;" and with this he offered Tsunéhei his own.

"Nay, my lord," replied Tsunéhei; "I have a famous sword, by Rai Kunitoshi, which my father gave me. I have never shown it to your lordship, but I have it safely stowed away in my room."

When Shôzayémon saw and examined the sword, he ad-

mired it greatly, and said, "This is indeed a beautiful blade, and one on which you may rely. Take it, then, and bear yourself nobly in the fight; only remember that Zempachi is a cunning spearsman, and be sure to be very cautious."

So Tsunéhei, after thanking his lord for his manifold kindnesses, took an affectionate leave, and went to Zempachi's house, and said to the servant—

"It seems that your master wants to speak to me. Be so good as to take me to see him."

So the servant led him into the garden, where Zempachi, spear in hand, was waiting to kill him. When Zempachi saw him, he cried out—

"Ha! so you have come back; and now, for your insolence, this day I mean to kill you with my own hand."

"Insolent yourself!" replied Tsunéhei. "Beast, and no Samurai! Come, let us see which of us is the better man."

Furiously incensed, Zempachi thrust with his spear at Tsunéhei; but he, trusting to his good sword, attacked Zempachi, who, cunning warrior as he was, could gain no advantage. At last Zempachi, losing his temper, began fighting less carefully, so that Tsunéhei found an opportunity of cutting the shaft of his spear. Zempachi then drew his sword, and two of his retainers came up to assist him; but Tsunéhei killed one of them, and wounded Zem-

pachi in the forehead. The second retainer fled affrighted at the youth's valour, and Zempachi was blinded by the blood which flowed from the wound on his forehead. Then Tsunéhei said—

"To kill one who is as a blind man were unworthy a soldier. Wipe the blood from your eyes, Sir Zempachi, and let us fight it out fairly."

So Zempachi, wiping away his blood, bound a kerchief round his head, and fought again desperately. But at last the pain of his wound and the loss of blood overcame him, and Tsunéhei cut him down with a wound in the shoulder and easily despatched him.

Then Tsunéhei went and reported the whole matter to the Governor of Yedo, and was put in prison until an inquiry could be made. But the Chief Priest of Bandzuin, who had heard of the affair, went and told the governor all the bad deeds of Zempachi, and having procured Tsunéhei's pardon, took him home and employed him as porter in the temple. So Tsunéhei changed his name to Chôbei, and earned much respect in the neighbourhood, both for his talents and for his many good works. If any man were in distress, he would help him, heedless of his own advantage or danger, until men came to look up to him as to a father, and many youths joined him and became his apprentices. So he built a house at Hanakawado, in Asakusa, and lived there with his ap-

prentices, whom he farmed out as spearsmen and footmen to the Daimios and Hatamotos, taking for himself the tithe of their earnings. But if any of them were sick or in trouble, Chôbei would nurse and support them, and provide physicians and medicine. And the fame of his goodness went abroad until his apprentices were more than two thousand men, and were employed in every part of the city. But as for Chôbei, the more he prospered, the more he gave in charity, and all men praised his good and generous heart.

This was the time when the Hatamotos had formed themselves into bands of Otokodaté,[1] of which Midzuno Jiurozayémon, Kondô Noborinosuké, and Abé Shirogorô were the chiefs. And the leagues of the nobles despised the leagues of the wardsmen, and treated them with scorn, and tried to put to shame Chôbei and his brave men; but the nobles' weapons recoiled upon themselves, and, whenever they tried to bring contempt upon Chôbei, they themselves were brought to ridicule. So there was great hatred on both sides.

One day, that Chôbei went to divert himself in a tea-house in the Yoshiwara, he saw a felt carpet spread in an upper room, which had been adorned as for some special occasion; and he asked the master of the house what guest of distinction was expected. The landlord replied that my Lord Jiurozayémon, the chief of the Otokodaté of the Hatamotos,

[1] See the story of Kazuma's Revenge.

was due there that afternoon. On hearing this, Chôbei replied that as he much wished to meet my Lord Jiurozayémon, he would lie down and await his coming. The landlord was put out at this, and knew not what to say; but yet he dare not thwart Chôbei, the powerful chief of the Otokodaté. So Chôbei took off his clothes and laid himself down upon the carpet. After a while my Lord Jiurozayémon arrived, and going upstairs found a man of large stature lying naked upon the carpet which had been spread for him.

"What low ruffian is this?" shouted he angrily to the landlord.

"My lord, it is Chôbei, the chief of the Otokodaté," answered the man, trembling.

Jiurozayémon at once suspected that Chôbei was doing this to insult him; so he sat down by the side of the sleeping man, and lighting his pipe began to smoke. When he had finished his pipe, he emptied the burning ashes into Chôbei's navel; but Chôbei, patiently bearing the pain, still feigned sleep. Ten times did Jiurozayémon fill his pipe,[1] and ten times he shook out the burning ashes on to Chôbei's navel; but he neither stirred nor spoke. Then Jiurozayémon, astonished at his fortitude, shook him, and roused him, saying—

[1] The tiny Japanese pipe contains but two or three whiffs; and as the tobacco is rolled up tightly in the fingers before it is inserted, the ash, when shaken out, is a little fire-ball from which a second pipe is lighted.

"Chôbei! Chôbei! wake up, man."

"What is the matter?" said Chôbei, rubbing his eyes as though he were awaking from a deep sleep; then seeing Jiurozayémon, he pretended to be startled, and said, "Oh, my lord, I know not who you are; but I have been very rude to your lordship. I was overcome with wine, and fell asleep: I pray your lordship to forgive me."

"Is your name Chôbei?"

"Yes, my lord, at your service. A poor wardsman, and ignorant of good manners, I have been very rude; but I pray your lordship to excuse my ill-breeding."

"Nay, nay; we have all heard the fame of Chôbei, of Bandzuin, and I hold myself lucky to have met you this day. Let us be friends."

"It is a great honour for a humble wardsman to meet a nobleman face to face."

As they were speaking, the waitresses brought in fish and wine, and Jiurozayémon pressed Chôbei to feast with him; and thinking to annoy Chôbei, offered him a large wine-cup,[1] which, however, he drank without shrinking, and then returned to his entertainer, who was by no means so

[1] It is an act of rudeness to offer a large wine-cup. As, however, the same cup is returned to the person who has offered it, the ill carries with it its own remedy. At a Japanese feast the same cup is passed from hand to hand, each person rinsing it in a bowl of water after using it, and before offering it to another.

well able to bear the fumes of the wine. Then Jiurozayémon hit upon another device for annoying Chôbei, and, hoping to frighten him, said—

"Here, Chôbei, let me offer you some fish;" and with those words he drew his sword, and, picking up a cake of baked fish upon the point of it, thrust it towards the wardsman's mouth. Any ordinary man would have been afraid to accept the morsel so roughly offered; but Chôbei simply opened his mouth, and taking the cake off the sword's point ate it without wincing. Whilst Jiurozayémon was wondering in his heart what manner of man this was, that nothing could daunt, Chôbei said to him—

"This meeting with your lordship has been an auspicious occasion to me, and I would fain ask leave to offer some humble gift to your lordship in memory of it.[1] Is there anything which your lordship would specially fancy?"

"I am very fond of cold maccaroni."

"Then I shall have the honour of ordering some for your lordship;" and with this Chôbei went downstairs, and calling one of his apprentices, named Tôken Gombei, who was waiting for him, gave him a hundred riyos (about £28), and bade him collect all the cold maccaroni to be found

[1] The giving of presents from inferiors to superiors is a common custom.

[2] *Tôken*, a nickname given to Gombei, after a savage dog that he killed. As a Chônin, or wardsman, he had no surname.

in the neighbouring cook-shops and pile it up in front of the tea-house. So Gombei went home, and, collecting Chôbei's apprentices, sent them out in all directions to buy the maccaroni. Jiurozayémon all this while was thinking of the pleasure he would have in laughing at Chôbei for offering him a mean and paltry present; but when, by degrees, the maccaroni began to be piled mountain-high around the tea-house, he saw that he could not make a fool of Chôbei, and went home discomfited.

It has already been told how Shirai Gompachi was befriended and helped by Chôbei.[1] His name will occur again in this story.

At this time there lived in the province of Yamato a certain Daimio, called Honda Dainaiki, who one day, when surrounded by several of his retainers, produced a sword, and bade them look at it and say from what smith's workshop the blade had come.

"I think this must be a Masamuné blade," said one Fuwa Banzayémon.

"No," said Nagoya Sanza, after examining the weapon attentively, "this certainly is a Muramasa."[2]

[1] See the story of Gompachi and Komurasaki.

[2] The swords of Muramasa, although so finely tempered that they are said to cut hard iron as though it were a melon, have the reputation of being unlucky: they are supposed by the superstitious to hunger after taking men's lives, and to be unable to repose in their scabbard. The principal duty of a

A third Samurai, named Takagi Umanojô, pronounced it to be the work of Shidzu Kanenji; and as they could not agree, but each maintained his opinion, their lord sent for a famous connoisseur to decide the point; and the sword proved, as Sanza had said, to be a genuine Muramasa. Sanza was delighted at the verdict; but the other two went home rather crestfallen. Umanojô, although he had been worsted in the

sword is to preserve tranquillity in the world, by punishing the wicked and protecting the good. But the bloodthirsty swords of Muramasa rather have the effect of maddening their owners, so that they either kill others indiscriminately or commit suicide. At the end of the sixteenth century Prince Tokugawa Iyéyasu was in the habit of carrying a spear made by Muramasa, with which he often scratched or cut himself by mistake. Hence the Tokugawa family avoid girding on Muramasa blades, which are supposed to be specially unlucky to their race. The murders of Gompachi, who wore a sword by this maker, also contributed to give his weapons a bad name.

The swords of one Tôshirô Yoshimitsu, on the other hand, are specially auspicious to the Tokugawa family, for the following reason. After Iyéyasu had been defeated by Takéta Katsuyori, at the battle of the river Tenrin, he took refuge in the house of a village doctor, intending to put an end to his existence by *hara-kiri*, and drawing his dirk, which was made by Yoshimitsu, tried to plunge it into his belly, when, to his surprise, the blade turned. Thinking that the dirk must be a bad one, he took up an iron mortar for grinding medicines and tried it upon that, and the point entered and transfixed the mortar. He was about to stab himself a second time, when his followers, who had missed him, and had been searching for him everywhere, came up, and seeing their master about to kill himself, stayed his hand, and took away the dirk by force. Then they set him upon his horse, and compelled him to fly to his own province of Mikawa, whilst they kept his pursuers at bay. After this, when, by the favour of Heaven, Iyéyasu became Shogun, it was considered that of a surety there must have been a good spirit in the blade that refused to drink his blood; and ever since that time the blades of Yoshimitsu have been considered lucky in his family.

argument, bore no malice nor ill-will in his heart; but Banzayémon, who was a vain-glorious personage, puffed up with the idea of his own importance, conceived a spite against Sanza, and watched for an opportunity to put him to shame. At last, one day Banzayémon, eager to be revenged upon Sanza, went to the Prince, and said, "Your lordship ought to see Sanza fence; his swordsmanship is beyond all praise. I know that I am no match for him; still, if it will please your lordship, I will try a bout with him;" and the Prince, who was a mere stripling, and thought it would be rare sport, immediately sent for Sanza and desired he would fence with Banzayémon. So the two went out into the garden, and stood up facing each other, armed with wooden swords. Now Banzayémon was proud of his skill, and thought he had no equal in fencing; so he expected to gain an easy victory over Sanza, and promised himself the luxury of giving his adversary a beating that should fully make up for the mortification which he had felt in the matter of the dispute about the sword. It happened, however, that he had undervalued the skill of Sanza, who, when he saw that his adversary was attacking him savagely and in good earnest, by a rapid blow struck Banzayémon so sharply on the wrist that he dropped the sword, and, before he could pick it up again, delivered a second cut on the shoulder, which sent him rolling over in the dust. All the officers present, seeing this, praised Sanza's

skill, and Banzayémon, utterly stricken with shame, ran away home and hid himself.

After this affair Sanza rose high in the favour of his lord; and Banzayémon, who was more than ever jealous of him, feigned sickness, and stayed at home devising schemes for Sanza's ruin.

Now it happened that the Prince, wishing to have the Muramasa blade mounted, sent for Sanza and entrusted it to his care, ordering him to employ the most cunning workmen in the manufacture of the scabbard-hilt and ornaments; and Sanza, having received the blade, took it home, and put it carefully away. When Banzayémon heard of this, he was overjoyed; for he saw that his opportunity for revenge had come. He determined, if possible, to kill Sanza, but at any rate to steal the sword which had been committed to his care by the Prince, knowing full well that if Sanza lost the sword he and his family would be ruined. Being a single man, without wife or child, he sold his furniture, and, turning all his available property into money, made ready to fly the country. When his preparations were concluded, he went in the middle of the night to Sanza's house and tried to get in by stealth; but the doors and shutters were all carefully bolted from the inside, and there was no hole by which he could effect an entrance. All was still, however, and the people of the house were evidently fast asleep; so he climbed

up to the second story, and, having contrived to unfasten a window, made his way in. With soft, cat-like footsteps he crept downstairs, and, looking into one of the rooms, saw Sanza and his wife sleeping on the mats, with their little son Kosanza, a boy of thirteen, curled up in his quilt between them. The light in the night-lamp was at its last flicker, but, peering through the gloom, he could just see the Prince's famous Muramasa sword lying on a sword-rack in the raised part of the room; so he crawled stealthily along until he could reach it, and stuck it in his girdle. Then, drawing near to Sanza, he bestrode his sleeping body, and, brandishing the sword, made a thrust at his throat; but in his excitement his hand shook, so that he missed his aim, and only scratched Sanza, who, waking with a start and trying to jump up, felt himself held down by a man standing over him. Stretching out his hands, he would have wrestled with his enemy; when Banzayémon, leaping back, kicked over the night-lamp, and throwing open the shutters, dashed into the garden. Snatching up his sword, Sanza rushed out after him; and his wife, having lit a lantern and armed herself with a halberd,[1] went out, with her son Kosanza, who carried a drawn dirk, to help her husband. Then Banzayémon, who was

[1] The halberd is the special arm of the Japanese woman of gentle blood. That which was used by Kasa Gozen, one of the ladies of Yoshitsuné, the hero of the twelfth century, is still preserved at Asakusa. In old-fashioned families young ladies are regularly instructed in fencing with the halberds.

hiding in the shadow of a large pine-tree, seeing the lantern and dreading detection, seized a stone and hurled it at the light, and, chancing to strike it, put it out, and then scrambling over the fence unseen, fled into the darkness. When Sanza had searched all over the garden in vain, he returned to his room and examined his wound, which proving very slight, he began to look about to see whether the thief had carried off anything; but when his eye fell upon the place where the Muramasa sword had lain, he saw that it was gone. He hunted everywhere, but it was not to be found. The precious blade with which his Prince had entrusted him had been stolen, and the blame would fall heavily upon him. Filled with grief and shame at the loss, Sanza and his wife and child remained in great anxiety until the morning broke, when he reported the matter to one of the Prince's councillors, and waited in seclusion until he should receive his lord's commands.

It soon became known that Banzayémon, who had fled the province, was the thief; and the councillors made their report accordingly to the Prince, who, although he expressed his detestation of the mean action of Banzayémon, could not absolve Sanza from blame, in that he had not taken better precautions to insure the safety of the sword that had been committed to his trust. It was decided, therefore, that Sanza should be dismissed from his service, and that his goods

should be confiscated; with the proviso that should he be able to find Banzayémon, and recover the lost Muramasa blade, he should be restored to his former position. Sanza, who from the first had made up his mind that his punishment would be severe, accepted the decree without a murmur; and, having committed his wife and son to the care of his relations, prepared to leave the country as a Rônin and search for Banzayémon.

Before starting, however, he thought that he would go to his brother-officer, Takagi Umanojô, and consult with him as to what course he should pursue to gain his end. But this Umanojô, who was by nature a churlish fellow, answered him unkindly, and said—

"It is true that Banzayémon is a mean thief; but still it was through your carelessness that the sword was lost. It is of no avail your coming to me for help: you must get it back as best you may."

"Ah!" replied Sanza, "I see that you too bear me a grudge because I defeated you in the matter of the judgment of the sword. You are no better than Banzayémon yourself."

And his heart was bitter against his fellow-men, and he left the house determined to kill Umanojô first and afterwards to track out Banzayémon; so, pretending to start on his journey, he hid in an inn, and waited for an opportunity to attack Umanojô.

One day Umanojô, who was very fond of fishing, had taken his son Umanosuké, a lad of sixteen, down to the sea-shore with him; and as the two were enjoying themselves, all of a sudden they perceived a Samurai running towards them, and when he drew near they saw that it was Sanza. Umanojô, thinking that Sanza had come back in order to talk over some important matter, left his angling and went to meet him. Then Sanza cried out—

"Now, Sir Umanojô, draw and defend yourself. What! were you in league with Banzayémon to vent your spite upon me? Draw, sir, draw! You have spirited away your accomplice; but, at any rate, you are here yourself, and shall answer for your deed. It is no use playing the innocent; your astonished face shall not save you. Defend yourself, coward and traitor!" and with these words Sanza flourished his naked sword.

"Nay, Sir Sanza," replied the other, anxious by a soft answer to turn away his wrath; "I am innocent of this deed. Waste not your valour on so poor a cause."

"Lying knave!" said Sanza; "think not that you can impose upon me. I know your treacherous heart;" and, rushing upon Umanojô, he cut him on the forehead so that he fell in agony upon the sand.

Umanosuké in the meanwhile, who had been fishing at some distance from his father, rushed up when he saw him in this

perilous situation and threw a stone at Sanza, hoping to distract his attention; but, before he could reach the spot, Sanza had delivered the death-blow, and Umanojô lay a corpse upon the beach.

"Stop, Sir Sanza—murderer of my father!" cried Umanosuké, drawing his sword, "stop and do battle with me, that I may avenge his death."

"That you should wish to slay your father's enemy," replied Sanza, "is but right and proper; and although I had just cause of quarrel with your father, and killed him, as a Samurai should, yet would I gladly forfeit my life to you here; but my life is precious to me for one purpose—that I may punish Banzayémon and get back the stolen sword. When I shall have restored that sword to my lord, then will I give you your revenge, and you may kill me. A soldier's word is truth; but, as a pledge that I will fulfil my promise, I will give to you, as hostages, my wife and boy. Stay your avenging hand, I pray you, until my desire shall have been attained."

Umanosuké, who was a brave and honest youth, as famous in the clan for the goodness of his heart as for his skill in the use of arms, when he heard Sanza's humble petition, relented, and said—

"I agree to wait, and will take your wife and boy as hostages for your return."

"I humbly thank you," said Sanza. "When I shall have chastised Banzayémon, I will return, and you shall claim your revenge."

So Sanza went his way to Yedo to seek for Banzayémon, and Umanosuké mourned over his father's grave.

Now Banzayémon, when he arrived in Yedo, found himself friendless and without the means of earning his living, when by accident he heard of the fame of Chôbei of Bandzuin, the chief of the Otokodaté, to whom he applied for assistance; and having entered the fraternity, supported himself by giving fencing-lessons. He had been plying this trade for some time, and had earned some little reputation, when Sanza reached the city and began his search for him. But the days and months passed away, and, after a year's fruitless seeking, Sanza, who had spent all his money without obtaining a clue to the whereabouts of his enemy, was sorely perplexed, and was driven to live by his wits as a fortune-teller. Work as he would, it was a hard matter for him to gain the price of his daily food, and, in spite of all his pains, his revenge seemed as far off as ever, when he bethought him that the Yoshiwara was one of the most bustling places in the city, and that if he kept watch there, sooner or later he would be sure to fall in with Banzayémon. So he bought a hat of plaited bamboo, that completely covered his face, and lay in wait at the Yoshiwara.

One day Banzayémon and two of Chôbei's apprentices Tôken Gombei and Shirobei, who, from his wild and indocile nature, was surnamed "the Colt," were amusing themselves and drinking in an upper story of a tea-house in the Yoshiwara, when Tôken Gombei, happening to look down upon the street below, saw a Samurai pass by, poorly clad in worn-out old clothes, but whose poverty-stricken appearance contrasted with his proud and haughty bearing.

"Look there!" said Gombei, calling the attention of the others; "look at that Samurai. Dirty and ragged as his coat is, how easy it is to see that he is of noble birth! Let us wardsmen dress ourselves up in never so fine clothes, we could not look as he does."

"Ay," said Shirobei, "I wish we could make friends with him, and ask him up here to drink a cup of wine with us. However, it would not be seemly for us wardsmen to go and invite a person of his condition."

"We can easily get over that difficulty," said Banzayémon. "As I am a Samurai myself, there will be no impropriety in my going and saying a few civil words to him, and bringing him in."

The other two having joyfully accepted the offer, Banzayémon ran downstairs, and went up to the strange Samurai and saluted him, saying—

"I pray you to wait a moment, Sir Samurai. My name is

Fuwa Banzayémon at your service. I am a Rônin, as I judge from your appearance that you are yourself. I hope you will not think me rude if I venture to ask you to honour me with your friendship, and to come into this tea-house to drink a cup of wine with me and two of my friends."

The strange Samurai, who was no other than Sanza, looking at the speaker through the interstices of his deep bamboo hat, and recognizing his enemy Banzayémon, gave a start of surprise, and, uncovering his head, said sternly—

"Have you forgotten my face, Banzayémon?"

For a moment Banzayémon was taken aback, but quickly recovering himself, he replied, "Ah! Sir Sanza, you may well be angry with me; but since I stole the Muramasa sword, and fled to Yedo I have known no peace: I have been haunted by remorse for my crime. I shall not resist your vengeance: do with me as it shall seem best to you; or rather take my life, and let there be an end of this quarrel."

"Nay," answered Sanza, "to kill a man who repents him of his sins is a base and ignoble action. When you stole from me the Muramasa blade which had been confided to my care by my lord, I became a disgraced and ruined man. Give me back that sword, that I may lay it before my lord, and I will spare your life. I seek to slay no man needlessly."

"Sir Sanza, I thank you for your mercy. At this moment I have not the sword by me, but if you will go into yonder

tea-house and wait awhile, I will fetch it and deliver it into your hands."

Sanza having consented to this, the two men entered the tea-house, where Banzayémon's two companions were waiting for them. But Banzayémon, ashamed of his own evil deed, still pretended that Sanza was a stranger, and introduced him as such, saying—

"Come, Sir Samurai, since we have the honour of your company, let me offer you a wine-cup."

Banzayémon and the two men pressed the wine-cup upon Sanza so often that the fumes gradually got into his head and he fell asleep; the two wardsmen, seeing this, went out for a walk, and Banzayémon, left alone with the sleeping man, began to revolve fresh plots against him in his mind. On a sudden, a thought struck him. Noiselessly seizing Sanza's sword, which he had laid aside on entering the room, he stole softly downstairs with it, and, carrying it into the back yard, pounded and blunted its edge with a stone, and having made it useless as a weapon, he replaced it in its scabbard, and running upstairs again laid it in its place without disturbing Sanza, who, little suspecting treachery, lay sleeping off the effects of the wine. At last, however, he awoke, and, ashamed at having been overcome by drink, he said to Banzayémon—

"Come, Banzayémon, we have dallied too long; give me the Muramasa sword, and let me go."

"Of course," replied the other, sneeringly, "I am longing to give it back to you; but unfortunately, in my poverty, I have been obliged to pawn it for fifty ounces of silver. If you have so much money about you, give it to me and I will return the sword to you."

"Wretch!" cried Sanza, seeing that Banzayémon was trying to fool him, "have I not had enough of your vile tricks? At any rate, if I cannot get back the sword, your head shall be laid before my lord in its place. Come," added he, stamping his foot impatiently, "defend yourself."

"With all my heart. But not here in this tea-house. Let us go to the Mound, and fight it out."

"Agreed! There is no need for us to bring trouble on the landlord. Come to the Mound of the Yoshiwara."

So they went to the Mound, and drawing their swords, began to fight furiously. As the news soon spread abroad through the Yoshiwara that a duel was being fought upon the Mound, the people flocked out to see the sight; and among them came Tôken Gombei and Shirobei, Banzayémon's companions, who, when they saw that the combatants were their own friend and the strange Samurai, tried to interfere and stop the fight, but, being hindered by the thickness of the crowd, remained as spectators. The two men fought desperately, each driven by fierce rage against the other; but Sanza, who was by far the better fencer of the two, once,

twice, and again dealt blows which should have cut Banzayémon down, and yet no blood came forth. Sanza, astonished at this, put forth all his strength, and fought so skilfully, that all the bystanders applauded him, and Banzayémon, though he knew his adversary's sword to be blunted, was so terrified that he stumbled and fell. Sanza, brave soldier that he was, scorned to strike a fallen foe, and bade him rise and fight again. So they engaged again, and Sanza, who from the beginning had had the advantage, slipped and fell in his turn; Banzayémon, forgetting the mercy which had been shown to him, rushed up, with bloodthirsty joy glaring in his eyes, and stabbed Sanza in the side as he lay on the ground. Faint as he was, he could not lift his hand to save himself; and his craven foe was about to strike him again, when the bystanders all cried shame upon his baseness. Then Gombei and Shirobei lifted up their voices and said—

"Hold, coward! Have you forgotten how your own life was spared but a moment since? Beast of a Samurai, we have been your friends hitherto, but now behold in us the avengers of this brave man."

With these words the two men drew their dirks, and the spectators fell back as they rushed in upon Banzayémon, who, terror-stricken by their fierce looks and words, fled without having dealt the deathblow to Sanza. They tried to pursue him, but he made good his escape, so the two men returned

to help the wounded man. When he came to himself by dint of their kind treatment, they spoke to him and comforted him, and asked him what province he came from, that they might write to his friends and tell them what had befallen him. Sanza, in a voice faint from pain and loss of blood, told them his name and the story of the stolen sword, and of his enmity against Banzayémon. "But," said he, "just now, when I was fighting, I struck Banzayémon more than once, and without effect. How could that have been?" Then they looked at his sword, which had fallen by his side, and saw that the edge was all broken away. More than ever they felt indignant at the baseness of Banzayémon's heart, and redoubled their kindness to Sanza; but, in spite of all their efforts, he grew weaker and weaker, until at last his breathing ceased altogether. So they buried the corpse honourably in an adjoining temple, and wrote to Sanza's wife and son, describing to them the manner of his death.

Now when Sanza's wife, who had long been anxiously expecting her husband's return, opened the letter and learned the cruel circumstances of his death, she and her son Kosanza mourned bitterly over his loss. Then Kosanza, who was now fourteen years old, said to his mother—

"Take comfort, mother; for I will go to Yedo and seek out this Banzayémon, my father's murderer, and I will surely

avenge his death. Now, therefore, make ready all that I need for this journey."

And as they were consulting over the manner of their revenge, Umanosuké, the son of Umanojô, whom Sanza had slain, having heard of the death of his father's enemy, came to the house. But he came with no hostile intent. True, Sanza had killed his father, but the widow and the orphan were guiltless, and he bore them no ill-will; on the contrary, he felt that Banzayémon was their common enemy. It was he who by his evil deeds had been the cause of all the mischief that had arisen, and now again, by murdering Sanza, he had robbed Umanosuké of his revenge. In this spirit he said to Kosanza—

"Sir Kosanza, I hear that your father has been cruelly murdered by Banzayémon at Yedo. I know that you will avenge the death of your father, as the son of a soldier should: if, therefore, you will accept my poor services, I will be your second, and will help you to the best of my ability. Banzayémon shall be my enemy, as he is yours."

"Nay, Sir Umanosuké, although I thank you from my heart, I cannot accept this favour at your hands. My father Sanza slew your noble father: that you should requite this misfortune thus is more than kind, but I cannot think of suffering you to risk your life on my behalf."

"Listen to me," replied Umanosuké, smiling, "and you will think it less strange that I should offer to help you. Last

year, when my father lay a bleeding corpse on the sea-shore, your father made a covenant with me that he would return to give me my revenge, so soon as he should have regained the stolen sword. Banzayémon, by murdering him on the Mound of the Yoshiwara, has thwarted me in this; and now upon whom can I avenge my father's death but upon him whose baseness was indeed its cause? Now, therefore, I am determined to go with you to Yedo, and not before the murders of our two fathers shall have been fully atoned for will we return to our own country."

When Kosanza heard this generous speech, he could not conceal his admiration; and the widow, prostrating herself at Umanosuké's feet, shed tears of gratitude.

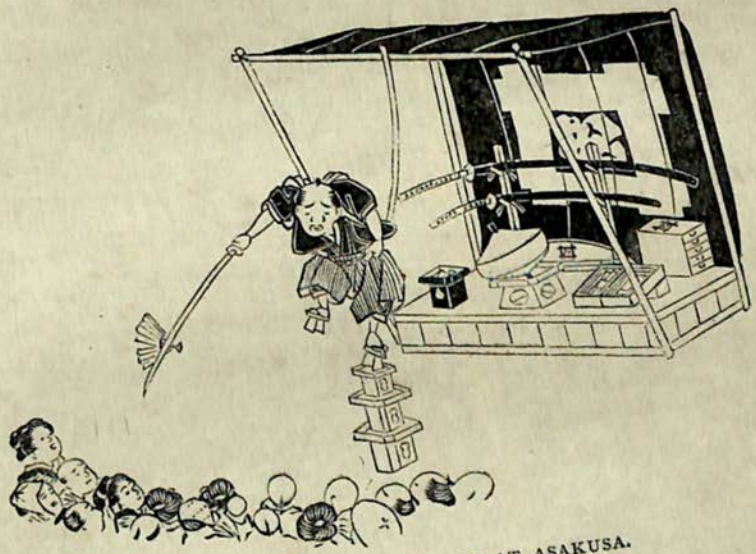
The two youths, having agreed to stand by one another, made all ready for their journey, and obtained leave from their prince to go in search of the traitor Banzayémon. They reached Yedo without meeting with any adventures, and, taking up their abode at a cheap inn, began to make their inquiries; but, although they sought far and wide, they could learn no tidings of their enemy. When three months had passed thus, Kosanza began to grow faint-hearted at their repeated failures; but Umanosuké supported and comforted him, urging him to fresh efforts. But soon a great misfortune befell them: Kosanza fell sick with ophthalmia, and neither the tender nursing of his friend, nor the drugs and

doctors upon whom Umanosuké spent all their money, had any effect on the suffering boy, who soon became stone blind. Friendless and penniless, the one deprived of his eyesight and only a clog upon the other, the two youths were thrown upon their own resources. Then Umanosuké, reduced to the last extremity of distress, was forced to lead out Kosanza to Asakusa to beg sitting by the roadside, whilst he himself, wandering hither and thither, picked up what he could from the charity of those who saw his wretched plight. But all this while he never lost sight of his revenge, and almost thanked the chance which had made him a beggar, for the opportunity which it gave him of hunting out strange and hidden haunts of vagabond life into which in his more prosperous condition he could not have penetrated. So he walked to and fro through the city, leaning on a stout staff, in which he had hidden his sword, waiting patiently for fortune to bring him face to face with Banzayémon.

Now Banzayémon, after he had killed Sanza on the Mound of the Yoshiwara, did not dare to show his face again in the house of Chôbei, the Father of the Otokodaté; for he knew that the two men, Tôken Gombei and Shirobei "the loose Colt," would not only bear an evil report of him, but would even kill him if he fell into their hands, so great had been their indignation at his cowardly conduct; so he entered a company of mountebanks, and earned his living by showing tricks of

swordmanship, and selling tooth-powder at the Okuyama, at Asakusa.[1] One day, as he was going towards Asakusa to ply his trade, he caught sight of a blind beggar, in whom, in spite of his poverty-stricken and altered appearance, he recognized the son of his enemy. Rightly he judged that, in spite of the boy's apparently helpless condition, the discovery boded no weal for him; so mounting to the upper story of a tea-house hard by, he watched to see who should come to Kosanza's assistance. Nor had he to wait long, for presently he saw a second beggar come up and speak words of encouragement and kindness to the blind youth; and looking attentively, he saw that the new-comer was Umanosuké. Having thus discovered who was on his track, he went home and sought means of killing the two beggars; so he lay in wait and traced them to the poor hut where they dwelt, and one night, when he knew Umanosuké to be absent, he crept in. Kosanza, being blind, thought that the footsteps were those of Umanosuké, and jumped up to welcome him; but he, in his heartless cruelty, which not even the boy's piteous state could move, slew Kosanza as he helplessly stretched out his hands to feel for his friend. The deed was yet unfinished when Umanosuké returned, and, hearing a scuffle inside the hut, drew the sword which was hidden in his staff and rushed in; but Banzayémon, profiting by the darkness, eluded him and fled

[1] See Note at end of story.



TRICKS OF SWORDSMANSHIP AT ASAKUSA.

from the hut. Umanosuké followed swiftly after him; but just as he was on the point of catching him, Banzayémon, making a sweep backwards with his drawn sword, wounded Umanosuké in the thigh, so that he stumbled and fell, and the murderer, swift of foot, made good his escape. The wounded youth tried to pursue him again, but being compelled by the pain of his wound to desist, returned home and found his blind companion lying dead, weltering in his own blood. Cursing his unhappy fate, he called in the beggars of the fraternity to which he belonged, and between them they buried Kosanza, and he himself being too poor to procure a surgeon's aid, or to buy healing medicaments for his wound, became a cripple.

It was at this time that Shirai Gompachi, who was living under the protection of Chôbei, the Father of the Otokodaté, was in love with Komurasaki, the beautiful courtesan who lived at the sign of the Three Sea-shores, in the Yoshiwara. He had long exhausted the scanty supplies which he possessed, and was now in the habit of feeding his purse by murder and robbery, that he might have means to pursue his wild and extravagant life. One night, when he was out on his cut-throat business, his fellows, who had long suspected that he was after no good, sent one of their number, named Seibei, to watch him. Gompachi, little dreaming that any one was following him, swaggered along the street until he fell in with

a wardsman, whom he cut down and robbed; but the booty proving small, he waited for a second chance, and, seeing a light moving in the distance, hid himself in the shadow of a large tub for catching rain-water till the bearer of the lantern should come up. When the man drew near, Gompachi saw that he was dressed as a traveller, and wore a long dirk; so he sprung out from his lurking-place and made to kill him; but the traveller nimbly jumped on one side, and proved no mean adversary, for he drew his dirk and fought stoutly for his life. However, he was no match for so skilful a swordsman as Gompachi, who, after a sharp struggle, despatched him, and carried off his purse, which contained two hundred riyos. Overjoyed at having found so rich a prize, Gompachi was making off for the Yoshiwara, when Seibei, who, horror-stricken, had seen both murders, came up and began to upbraid him for his wickedness. But Gompachi was so smooth-spoken and so well liked by his comrades, that he easily persuaded Seibei to hush the matter up, and accompany him to the Yoshiwara for a little diversion. As they were talking by the way, Seibei said to Gompachi—

"I bought a new dirk the other day, but I have not had an opportunity to try it yet. You have had so much experience in swords that you ought to be a good judge. Pray look at this dirk, and tell me whether you think it good for anything."

"We'll soon see what sort of metal it is made of," answered Gompachi. "We'll just try it on the first beggar we come across."

At first Seibei was horrified by this cruel proposal, but by degrees he yielded to his companion's persuasions; and so they went on their way until Seibei spied out a crippled beggar lying asleep on the bank outside the Yoshiwara. The sound of their footsteps aroused the beggar, who seeing a Samurai and a wardsman pointing at him, and evidently speaking about him, thought that their consultation could bode him no good. So he pretended to be still asleep, watching them carefully all the while; and when Seibei went up to him, brandishing his dirk, the beggar, avoiding the blow, seized Seibei's arm, and twisting it round, flung him into the ditch below. Gompachi, seeing his companion's discomfiture, attacked the beggar, who, drawing a sword from his staff, made such lightning-swift passes that, crippled though he was, and unable to move his legs freely, Gompachi could not overpower him; and although Seibei crawled out of the ditch and came to his assistance, the beggar, nothing daunted, dealt his blows about him to such good purpose that he wounded Seibei in the temple and arm. Then Gompachi, reflecting that after all he had no quarrel with the beggar, and that he had better attend to Seibei's wounds than go on fighting to no purpose,

drew Seibei away, leaving the beggar, who was too lame to follow them, in peace. When he examined Seibei's wounds, he found that they were so severe that they must give up their night's frolic and go home. So they went back to the house of Chôbei, the Father of the Otokodaté, and Seibei, afraid to show himself with his sword-cuts, feigned sickness, and went to bed. On the following morning Chôbei, happening to need his apprentice Seibei's services, sent for him, and was told that he was sick; so he went to the room, where he lay abed, and, to his astonishment, saw the cut upon his temple. At first the wounded man refused to answer any questions as to how he had been hurt; but at last, on being pressed by Chôbei, he told the whole story of what had taken place the night before. When Chôbei heard the tale, he guessed that the valiant beggar must be some noble Samurai in disguise, who, having a wrong to avenge, was biding his time to meet with his enemy; and wishing to help so brave a man, he went in the evening, with his two faithful apprentices, Tôken Gombei and Shirobei "the loose Colt," to the bank outside the Yoshiwara to seek out the beggar. The latter, not one whit frightened by the adventure of the previous night, had taken his place as usual, and was lying on the bank, when Chôbei came up to him, and said—

"Sir, I am Chôbei, the chief of the Otokodaté, at your

service. I have learnt with deep regret that two of my men insulted and attacked you last night. However, happily, even Gompachi, famous swordsman though he be, was no match for you, and had to beat a retreat before you. I know, therefore, that you must be a noble Samurai, who by some ill chance have become a cripple and a beggar. Now, therefore, I pray you tell me all your story; for, humble wardsman as I am, I may be able to assist you, if you will condescend to allow me."

The cripple at first tried to shun Chôbei's questions; but at last, touched by the honesty and kindness of his speech, he replied—

"Sir, my name is Takagi Umanosuké, and I am a native of Yamato;" and then he went on to narrate all the misfortunes which the wickedness of Banzayémon had brought about.

"This is indeed a strange story," said Chôbei, who had listened with indignation. "This Banzayémon, before I knew the blackness of his heart, was once under my protection. But after he murdered Sanza, hard by here, he was pursued by these two apprentices of mine, and since that day he has been no more to my house."

When he had introduced the two apprentices to Umanosuké, Chôbei pulled forth a suit of silk clothes befitting a gentleman, and having made the crippled youth lay aside his

beggar's raiment, led him to a bath, and had his hair dressed. Then he bade Tôken Gombei lodge him and take charge of him, and, having sent for a famous physician, caused Umanosuké to undergo careful treatment for the wound in his thigh. In the course of two months the pain had almost disappeared, so that he could stand easily; and when, after another month, he could walk about a little, Chôbei removed him to his own house, pretending to his wife and apprentices that he was one of his own relations who had come on a visit to him.

After a while, when Umanosuké had become quite cured, he went one day to worship at a famous temple, and on his way home after dark he was overtaken by a shower of rain, and took shelter under the eaves of a house, in a part of the city called Yanagiwara, waiting for the sky to clear. Now it happened that this same night Gompachi had gone out on one of his bloody expeditions, to which his poverty and his love for Komurasaki drove him in spite of himself, and, seeing a Samurai standing in the gloom, he sprang upon him before he had recognized Umanosuké, whom he knew as a friend of his patron Chôbei. Umanosuké drew and defended himself, and soon contrived to slash Gompachi on the forehead; so that the latter, seeing himself overmatched, fled under the cover of the night. Umanosuké, fearing to hurt his recently healed wound, did not give chase, and went

quietly back to Chôbei's house. When Gompachi returned home, he hatched a story to deceive Chôbei as to the cause of the wound on his forehead. Chôbei, however, having overheard Umanosuké reproving Gompachi for his wickedness, soon became aware of the truth; and not caring to keep a robber and murderer near him, gave Gompachi a present of money, and bade him return to his house no more.

And now Chôbei, seeing that Umanosuké had recovered his strength, divided his apprentices into bands, to hunt out Banzayémon, in order that the vendetta might be accomplished. It soon was reported to him that Banzayémon was earning his living among the mountebanks of Asakusa; so Chôbei communicated this intelligence to Umanosuké, who made his preparations accordingly; and on the following morning the two went to Asakusa, where Banzayémon was astonishing a crowd of country boors by exhibiting tricks with his sword.

Then Umanosuké, striding through the gaping rabble, shouted out—

"False, murderous coward, your day has come! I, Umanosuké, the son of Umanojô, have come to demand vengeance for the death of three innocent men who have perished by your treachery. If you are a man, defend yourself. This day shall your soul see hell!"

With these words he rushed furiously upon Banzayémon,

who, seeing escape to be impossible, stood upon his guard. But his coward's heart quailed before the avenger, and he soon lay bleeding at his enemy's feet.

But who shall say how Umanosuké thanked Chôbei for his assistance; or how, when he had returned to his own country, he treasured up his gratitude in his heart, looking upon Chôbei as more than a second father?

Thus did Chôbei use his power to punish the wicked, and to reward the good—giving of his abundance to the poor, and succouring the unfortunate, so that his name was honoured far and near. It remains only to record the tragical manner of his death.

We have already told how my lord Midzuno Jiurozayémon, the chief of the associated nobles, had been foiled in his attempts to bring shame upon Chôbei, the Father of the Otokodaté; and how, on the contrary, the latter, by his ready wit, never failed to make the proud noble's weapons recoil upon him. The failure of these attempts rankled in the breast of Jiurozayémon, who hated Chôbei with an intense hatred, and sought to be revenged upon him. One day he sent a retainer to Chôbei's house with a message to the effect that on the following day my lord Jiurozayémon would be glad to see Chôbei at his house, and to offer him a cup of wine, in return for the cold maccaroni with which his lordship had been feasted some time since. Chôbei im-

mediately suspected that in sending this friendly summons the cunning noble was hiding a dagger in a smile; however, he knew that if he stayed away out of fear he would be branded as a coward, and made a laughing-stock for fools to jeer at. Not caring that Jiurozayémon should succeed in his desire to put him to shame, he sent for his favourite apprentice, Tôken Gombei, and said to him—

"I have been invited to a drinking-bout by Midzuno Jiurozayémon. I know full well that this is but a stratagem to requite me for having fooled him, and maybe his hatred will go the length of killing me. However, I shall go and take my chance; and if I detect any sign of foul play, I'll try to serve the world by ridding it of a tyrant, who passes his life in oppressing the helpless farmers and wardsmen. Now as, even if I succeed in killing him in his own house, my life must pay forfeit for the deed, do you come to-morrow night with a burying-tub,[1] and fetch my corpse from this Jiurozayémon's house."

[1] The lowest classes in Japan are buried in a squatting position, in a sort of barrel. One would have expected a person of Chôbei's condition and means to have ordered a square box. It is a mistake to suppose the burning of the dead to be universal in Japan: only about thirty per cent. of the lower classes, chiefly belonging to the Montô sect of Buddhism, are burnt. The rich and noble are buried in several square coffins, one inside the other, in a sitting position; and their bodies are partially preserved from decay by filling the nose, ears, and mouth with vermilion. In the case of the very wealthy, the coffin is completely filled in with vermilion. The family of the Princes of Mito, and some other nobles, bury their dead in a recumbent position.

Tôken Gombei, when he heard the "Father" speak thus, was horrified, and tried to dissuade him from obeying the invitation. But Chôbei's mind was fixed, and, without heeding Gombei's remonstrances, he proceeded to give instructions as to the disposal of his property after his death, and to settle all his earthly affairs.

On the following day, towards noon, he made ready to go to Jiurozayémon's house, bidding one of his apprentices precede him with a complimentary present.[1] Jiurozayémon, who was waiting with impatience for Chôbei to come, so soon as he heard of his arrival ordered his retainers to usher him into his presence; and Chôbei, having bade his apprentices without fail to come and fetch him that night, went into the house.

No sooner had he reached the room next to that in which Jiurozayémon was sitting than he saw that his suspicions of treachery were well founded; for two men with drawn swords rushed upon him, and tried to cut him down. Deftly avoiding their blows, however, he tripped up the one, and kicking the other in the ribs, sent him reeling and breathless against the wall; then, as calmly as if nothing had happened, he presented himself before Jiurozayémon, who, peeping through a chink in the sliding-doors, had watched his retainers' failure.

[1] It is customary, on the occasion of a first visit to a house to carry a present to the owner, who gives something of equal value on returning the visit.

"Welcome, welcome, Master Chôbei," said he. "I always had heard that you were a man of mettle, and I wanted to see what stuff you were made of; so I bade my retainers put your courage to the test. That was a masterly throw of yours. Well, you must excuse this churlish reception: come and sit down by me."

"Pray do not mention it, my lord," said Chôbei, smiling rather scornfully. "I know that my poor skill is not to be measured with that of a noble Samurai; and if these two good gentlemen had the worst of it just now, it was mere luck—that's all."

So, after the usual compliments had been exchanged, Chôbei sat down by Jiurozayémon, and the attendants brought in wine and condiments. Before they began to drink, however, Jiurozayémon said—

"You must be tired and exhausted with your walk this hot day, Master Chôbei. I thought that perhaps a bath might refresh you, so I ordered my men to get it ready for you. Would you not like to bathe and make yourself comfortable?"

Chôbei suspected that this was a trick to strip him, and take him unawares when he should have laid aside his dirk. However, he answered cheerfully—

"Your lordship is very good. I shall be glad to avail myself of your kind offer. Pray excuse me for a few moments."

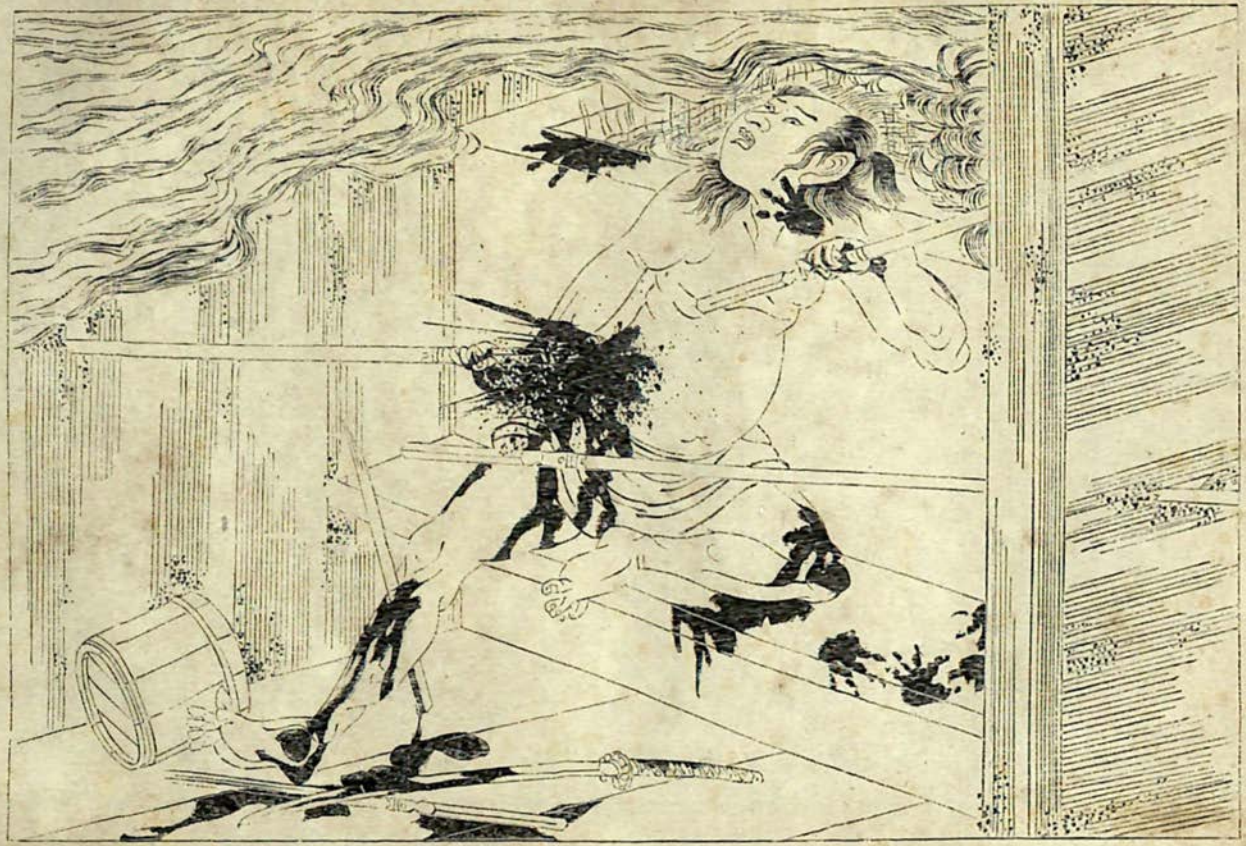
So he went to the bath-room, and, leaving his clothes outside, he got into the bath, with the full conviction that it would be the place of his death. Yet he never trembled nor quailed, determined that, if he needs must die, no man should say he had been a coward. Then Jiurozayémon, calling to his attendants, said—

"Quick! lock the door of the bath-room! We hold him fast now. If he gets out, more than one life will pay the price of his. He's a match for any six of you in fair fight. Lock the door, I say, and light up the fire under the bath;[1] and we'll boil him to death, and be rid of him. Quick, men, quick!"

So they locked the door, and fed the fire until the water hissed and bubbled within; and Chôbei, in his agony, tried to burst open the door, but Jiurozayémon ordered his men to thrust their spears through the partition wall and despatch him. Two of the spears Chôbei clutched and broke short off; but at last he was struck by a mortal blow under the ribs, and died a brave man by the hands of cowards.

That evening Tôken Gombei, who, to the astonishment of

[1] This sort of bath, in which the water is heated by the fire of a furnace, which is lighted from outside, is called Goyémon-buro, or *Goyémon's bath*, after a notorious robber named Goyémon, who attempted the life of Taiko Sama, the famous general and ruler of the sixteenth century, and suffered for his crimes by being boiled to death in oil—a form of execution which is now obsolete.



THE DEATH OF CHÔBEI OF BANDZUIN.

Chôbei's wife, had bought a burying-tub, came, with seven other apprentices, to fetch the Father of the Otokodaté from Jiurozayémon's house; and when the retainers saw them, they mocked at them, and said—

"What, have you come to fetch your drunken master home in a litter?"

"Nay," answered Gombei, "but we have brought a coffin for his dead body, as he bade us."

When the retainers heard this, they marvelled at the courage of Chôbei, who had thus wittingly come to meet his fate. So Chôbei's corpse was placed in the burying-tub, and handed over to his apprentices, who swore to avenge his death. Far and wide, the poor and friendless mourned for this good man. His son Chômatsu inherited his property; and his wife remained a faithful widow until her dying day, praying that she might sit with him in paradise upon the cup of the same lotus-flower.

Many a time did the apprentices of Chôbei meet together to avenge him; but Jiurozayémon eluded all their efforts, until, having been imprisoned by the Government in the temple called Kanyeiji, at Uyéno, as is related in the story of "Kazuma's Revenge," he was placed beyond the reach of their hatred.

So lived and so died Chôbei of Bandzuin, the Father of the Otokodaté of Yedo.

NOTE ON ASAKUSA.

Translated from a native book called the "Yedo Hanjôki," or Guide to the prosperous City of Yedo, and other sources.

ASAKUSA is the most bustling place in all Yedo. It is famous for the Temple Sensôji, on the hill of Kinriu, or the Golden Dragon, which from morning till night is thronged with visitors, rich and poor, old and young, flocking in sleeve to sleeve. The origin of the temple was as follows:—In the days of the Emperor Suiko, who reigned in the thirteenth century A.D., a certain noble, named Hashi no Nakatomo, fell into disgrace and left the Court; and having become a Rônin, or masterless man, he took up his abode on the Golden Dragon Hill, with two retainers, being brothers, named Hinokuma Hamanari and Hinokuma Takénari. These three men being reduced to great straits, and without means of earning their living, became fishermen. Now it happened that on the 6th day of the 3rd month of the 36th year of the reign of the Emperor Suiko (A.D. 1241), they went down in the morning to the Asakusa River to ply their trade; and having cast their nets took no fish, but at every throw they pulled up a figure of the Buddhist god Kwannon, which they threw into the river again. They sculled their boat away to another spot, but the same luck followed them, and nothing came to their nets save the figure of Kwannon. Struck by the miracle, they carried home the image, and, after fervent prayer, built a temple on the Golden Dragon Hill, in which they enshrined it. The temple thus founded was enriched by the benefactions of wealthy and pious persons, whose care raised its buildings to the dignity of the first temple in Yedo. Tradition

says that the figure of Kwannon which was fished up in the net was one inch and eight-tenths in height.

The main hall of the temple is sixty feet square, and is adorned with much curious workmanship of gilding and of silvering, so that no place can be more excellently beautiful. There are two gates in front of it. The first is called the Gate of the Spirits of the Wind and of the Thunder, and is adorned with figures of those two gods. The Wind-god, whose likeness is that of a devil, carries the wind-bag; and the Thunder-god, who is also shaped like a devil, carries a drum and a drumstick.[1] The second gate is called the Gate of the gods Niô, or the Two Princes, whose colossal statues, painted red, and hideous to look upon, stand on either side of it. Between the gates is an approach four hundred yards in length, which is occupied by the stalls of hucksters, who sell toys and trifles for women and children, and by foul and loathsome beggars. Passing through the gate of the gods Niô, the main hall of the temple strikes the eye. Countless niches and shrines of the gods stand outside it, and an old woman earns her livelihood at a tank filled with water, to which the votaries of the gods come and wash themselves that they may pray with clean hands. Inside are the images of the gods, lanterns, incense-burners, candlesticks, a huge money-box, into which the offerings of the pious are thrown, and votive tablets[2] representing the famous gods and goddesses,

[1] This gate was destroyed by fire a few years since.

[2] Sir Rutherford Alcock, in his book upon Japan, states that the portraits of the most famous courtesans of Yedo are yearly hung up in the temple at Asakusa. No such pictures are to be seen now, and no Japanese of whom I have made inquiries have heard of such a custom. The priests of the temple deny that their fane was ever so polluted, and it is probable that the statement is but one of the many strange mistakes into which an imperfect knowledge of the language led the earlier travellers in Japan. In spite of all that

heroes and heroines, of old. Behind the chief building is a broad space called the *okuyama*, where young and pretty waitresses, well dressed and painted, invite the weary pilgrims and holiday-makers to refresh themselves with tea and sweetmeats. Here, too, are all sorts of sights to be seen, such as wild beasts, performing monkeys, automata, conjurers, wooden and paper figures, which take the place of the waxworks of the West, acrobats, and jesters for the amusement of women and children. Altogether it is a lively and a joyous scene; there is not its equal in the city.

At Asakusa, as indeed all over Yedo, are to be found fortune-tellers, who prey upon the folly of the superstitious. With a treatise on physiognomy laid on a desk before them, they call out to this man that he has an ill-omened forehead, and to that man that the space between his nose and his lips is unlucky. Their tongues wag like flowing water until the passers-by are attracted to their stalls. If the seer finds a customer, he closes his eyes, and, lifting the divining-sticks reverently to his forehead, mutters incantations between his teeth. Then, suddenly parting the sticks in two bundles, he prophesies good or evil, according to the number in each. With a magnifying-glass he examines his dupe's face and the palms of his hands. By the fashion of his clothes and his general manner the prophet sees whether he is a countryman or from the city. "I am afraid, sir," says he, "you have not been altogether fortunate in life, but I foresee that great luck awaits you in two or three months;" or, like a clumsy doctor who makes his diagnosis according to his patient's fancies, if he sees his customer frowning and anxious, he adds, "Alas! in seven or eight months you must

has been said by persons who have had no opportunity of associating and exchanging ideas with the educated men of Japan, I maintain that in no country is the public harlot more abhorred and looked down upon.

beware of great misfortune. But I cannot tell you all about it for a slight fee:" with a long sigh he lays down the divining-sticks on the desk, and the frightened boor pays a further fee to hear the sum of the misfortune which threatens him, until, with three feet of bamboo slips and three inches of tongue, the clever rascal has made the poor fool turn his purse inside out.

The class of diviners called *Ichiko* profess to give tidings of the dead, or of those who have gone to distant countries. The Ichiko exactly corresponds to the spirit medium of the West. The trade is followed by women, of from fifteen or sixteen to some fifty years of age, who walk about the streets, carrying on their backs a divining-box about a foot square; they have no shop or stall, but wander about, and are invited into their customers' houses. The ceremony of divination is very simple. A porcelain bowl filled with water is placed upon a tray, and the customer, having written the name of the person with whom he wishes to hold communion on a long slip of paper, rolls it into a spill, which he dips into the water, and thrice sprinkles the Ichiko, or medium. She, resting her elbow upon her divining-box, and leaning her head upon her hand, mutters prayers and incantations until she has summoned the soul of the dead or absent person, which takes possession of her, and answers questions through her mouth. The prophecies which the Ichiko utters during her trance are held in high esteem by the superstitious and vulgar.

Hard by Asakusa is the theatre street. The theatres are called *Shiba-i*,[1] "turf places," from the fact that the first theatrical per-

[1] In Dr. Hepburn's Dictionary of the Japanese language, the Chinese characters given for the word *Shiba-i* are *chi chang* (*keih chang*, Morrison's Dictionary), "theatrical arena." The characters which are usually written, and which are etymologically correct, are *chih chü* (*che keu*, Morrison), "the place of plants or turf-plot."

formances were held on a turf plot. The origin of the drama in Japan, as elsewhere, was religious. In the reign of the Emperor Heijô (A.D. 805), there was a sudden volcanic depression of the earth close by a pond called Sarusawa, or the Monkey's Marsh, at Nara, in the province of Yamato, and a poisonous smoke issuing from the cavity struck down with sickness all those who came within its baneful influence; so the people brought quantities of firewood, which they burnt in order that the poisonous vapour might be dispelled. The fire, being the male influence, would assimilate with and act as an antidote upon the mephitic smoke, which was a female influence.[1] Besides this, as a further charm to exorcise the portent, the dance called Sambasô, which is still performed as a prelude to theatrical exhibitions by an actor dressed up as a venerable old man, emblematic of long life and felicity, was danced on a plot of turf in front of the Temple Kofukuji. By these means the smoke was dispelled, and the drama was originated. The story is to be found in the *Zoku Nihon Ki*, or supplementary history of Japan.

Three centuries later, during the reign of the Emperor Toba (A.D. 1108), there lived a woman called Iso no Zenji, who is looked upon as the mother of the Japanese drama. Her performances, however, seem only to have consisted in dancing or posturing dressed up in the costume of the nobles of the Court, from which fact her dance was called Otoko-mai, or the man's dance. Her name is only worth mentioning on account of the respect in which her memory is held by actors.

It was not until the year 1624 A.D. that a man named Saruwaka Kanzaburô, at the command of the Shogun, opened the first

[1] This refers to the Chinese doctrine of the Yang and Yin, the male and female influences pervading all creation.

theatre in Yedo in the Nakabashi, or Middle Bridge Street, where it remained until eight years later, when it was removed to the Ningiyô, or Doll Street. The company of this theatre was formed by two families named Miako and Ichimura, who did not long enjoy their monopoly, for in the year 1644 we find a third family, that of Yamamura, setting up a rival theatre in the Kobiki, or Sawyer Street.

In the year 1651, the Asiatic prejudice in favour of keeping persons of one calling in one place exhibited itself by the removal of the play-houses to their present site, and the street was called the Saruwaka Street, after Saruwaka Kanzaburo, the founder of the drama in Yedo.

Theatrical performances go on from six in the morning until six in the evening. Just as the day is about to dawn in the east, the sound of the drum is heard, and the dance Sambasô is danced as a prelude, and after this follow the dances of the famous actors of old ; these are called the extra performances (*waki kiyôgen*).

The dance of Nakamura represents the demon Shudendôji, an ogre who was destroyed by the hero Yorimitsu according to the following legend :—At the beginning of the eleventh century, when Ichijô the Second was Emperor, lived the hero Yorimitsu. Now it came to pass that in those days the people of Kiyôto were sorely troubled by an evil spirit, which took up its abode near the Rashô gate. One night, as Yorimitsu was making merry with his retainers, he said, "Who dares go and defy the demon of the Rashô gate, and set up a token that he has been there ?" "That dare I," answered Tsuna, who, having donned his coat of mail, mounted his horse, and rode out through the dark bleak night to the Rashô gate. Having written his name upon the gate, he was about to turn homewards when his horse began to shiver with fear, and a huge hand

coming forth from the gate seized the back of the knight's helmet. Tsuna, nothing daunted, struggled to get free, but in vain, so drawing his sword he cut off the demon's arm, and the spirit with a howl fled into the night. But Tsuna carried home the arm in triumph, and locked it up in a box. One night the demon, having taken the shape of Tsuna's aunt, came to him and said, "I pray thee show me the arm of the fiend." Tsuna answered, "I have shown it to no man, and yet to thee I will show it." So he brought forth the box and opened it, when suddenly a black cloud shrouded the figure of the supposed aunt, and the demon, having regained its arm, disappeared. From that time forth the people were more than ever troubled by the demon, who carried off to the hills all the fairest virgins of Kiyôto, whom he ravished and ate, so that there was scarce a beautiful damsel left in the city. Then was the Emperor very sorrowful, and he commanded Yorimitsu to destroy the monster; and the hero, having made ready, went forth with four trusty knights and another great captain to search among the hidden places of the mountains. One day as they were journeying far from the haunts of men, they fell in with an old man, who, having bidden them to enter his dwelling, treated them kindly, and set before them wine to drink; and when they went away, and took their leave of him, he gave them a present of more wine to take away with them. Now this old man was a mountain god. As they went on their way they met a beautiful lady, who was washing blood-stained clothes in the waters of the valley, weeping bitterly the while. When they asked her why she shed tears, she answered, "Sirs, I am a woman from Kiyôto, whom the demon has carried off; he makes me wash his clothes, and when he is weary of me, he will kill and eat me. I pray your lordships to save me." Then the six heroes bade the woman lead them to the ogre's cave, where a

hundred devils were mounting guard and waiting upon him. The woman, having gone in first, told the fiend of their coming; and he, thinking to slay and eat them, called them to him; so they entered the cave, which reeked with the smell of the flesh and blood of men, and they saw Shudendôji, a huge monster with the face of a little child. The six men offered him the wine which they had received from the mountain god, and he, laughing in his heart, drank and made merry, so that little by little the fumes of the wine got into his head, and he fell asleep. The heroes, themselves feigning sleep, watched for a moment when the devils were all off their guard to put on their armour and steal one by one into the demon's chamber. Then Yorimitsu, seeing that all was still, drew his sword, and cut off Shudendôji's head, which sprung up and bit at his head; luckily, however, Yorimitsu had put on two helmets, the one over the other, so he was not hurt. When all the devils had been slain, the heroes and the woman returned to Kiyôto carrying with them the head of Shudendôji, which was laid before the Emperor; and the fame of their action was spread abroad under heaven.

This Shudendôji is the ogre represented in the Nakamura dance. The Ichimura dance represents the seven gods of wealth; and the Morita dance represents a large ape, and is emblematical of drinking wine.

As soon as the sun begins to rise in the heaven, sign-boards all glistening with paintings and gold are displayed, and the play-goers flock in crowds to the theatre. The farmers and country-folk hurry over their breakfast, and the women and children, who have got up in the middle of the night to paint and adorn themselves, come from all the points of the compass to throng the gallery, which is hung with curtains as bright as

the rainbow in the departing clouds. The place soon becomes so crowded that the heads of the spectators are like the scales on a dragon's back. When the play begins, if the subject be tragic the spectators are so affected that they weep till they have to wring their sleeves dry. If the piece be comic they laugh till their chins are out of joint. The tricks and stratagems of the drama baffle description, and the actors are as graceful as the flight of the swallow. The triumph of persecuted virtue and the punishment of wickedness invariably crown the story. When a favourite actor makes his appearance, his entry is hailed with cheers. Fun and diversion are the order of the day, and rich and poor alike forget the cares which they have left behind them at home; and yet it is not all idle amusement, for there is a moral taught, and a practical sermon preached in every play.

The subjects of the pieces are chiefly historical, feigned names being substituted for those of the real heroes. Indeed, it is in the popular tragedies that we must seek for an account of many of the events of the last two hundred and fifty years; for only one very bald history[1] of those times has been published, of which but a limited number of copies were struck off from copper plates, and its circulation was strictly forbidden by the Shogun's Government. The stories are rendered with great minuteness and detail, so much so, that it sometimes takes a series of representations to act out one piece in its entirety. The Japanese are far in advance of the Chinese in their scenery and properties, and their pieces are sometimes capitally got up: a revolving stage enables them to shift from one scene to another with great rapidity. First-rate

[1] I allude to the *Tai Hei Nem-piyô*, or Annals of the Great Peace, a very rare work, only two or three copies of which have found their way into the libraries of foreigners.

actors receive as much as a thousand riyos (about £300) as their yearly salary. This, however, is a high rate of pay, and many a man has to strut before the public for little more than his daily rice; to a clever young actor it is almost enough reward to be allowed to enter a company in which there is a famous star. The salary of the actor, however, may depend upon the success of the theatre; for dramatic exhibitions are often undertaken as speculations by wealthy persons, who pay their company in proportion to their own profit. Beside his regular pay, a popular Japanese actor has a small mine of wealth in his patrons, who open their purses freely for the privilege of frequenting the green-room. The women's parts are all taken by men, as they used to be with us in ancient days. Touching the popularity of plays, it is related that in the year 1833, when two actors called Bandô Shûka and Segawa Rokô, both famous players of women's parts, died at the same time, the people of Yedo mourned to heaven and to earth; and if a million riyos could have brought back their lives, the money would have been forthcoming. Thousands flocked to their funeral, and the richness of their coffins and of the clothes laid upon them was admired by all.

"When I heard this," says Terakado Seiken, the author of the *Yedo Hanjôki*, "I lifted my eyes to heaven and heaved a great sigh. When my friend Saitô Shimei, a learned and good man, died, there was barely enough money to bury him; his needy pupils and friends subscribed to give him a humble coffin. Alas! alas! here was a teacher who from his youth up had honoured his parents, and whose heart knew no guile: if his friends were in need, he ministered to their wants; he grudged no pains to teach his fellow-men; his goodwill and charity were beyond praise; under the blue sky and bright day he never did a shameful deed. His

merits were as those of the sages of old; but because he lacked the cunning of a fox or badger he received no patronage from the wealthy, and, remaining poor to the day of his death, never had an opportunity of making his worth known. Alas! alas!"

The drama is exclusively the amusement of the middle and lower classes. Etiquette, sternest of tyrants, forbids the Japanese of high rank to be seen at any public exhibition, wrestling-matches alone excepted. Actors are, however, occasionally engaged to play in private for the edification of my lord and his ladies; and there is a kind of classical opera, called Nô, which is performed on stages specially built for the purpose in the palaces of the principal nobles. These Nô represent the entertainments by which the Sun Goddess was lured out of the cave in which she had hidden, a fable said to be based upon an eclipse. In the reign of the Emperor Yômei (A.D. 586—593), Hada Kawakatsu, a man born in Japan, but of Chinese extraction, was commanded by the Emperor to arrange an entertainment for the propitiation of the gods and the prosperity of the country. Kawakatsu wrote thirty-three plays, introducing fragments of Japanese poetry with accompaniments of musical instruments. Two performers, named Takéta and Hattori, having especially distinguished themselves in these entertainments, were ordered to prepare other similar plays, and their productions remain to the present day. The pious intention of the Nô being to pray for the prosperity of the country, they are held in the highest esteem by the nobles of the Court, the Daimios, and the military class: in old days they alone performed in these plays, but now ordinary actors take part in them.

The Nô are played in sets. The first of the set is specially dedicated to the propitiation of the gods; the second is performed in full armour, and is designed to terrify evil spirits, and to insure

the punishment of malefactors; the third is of a gentler intention, and its special object is the representation of all that is beautiful and fragrant and delightful. The performers wear hideous wigs and masks, not unlike those of ancient Greece, and gorgeous brocade dresses. The masks, which belong to what was the private company of the Shogun, are many centuries old, and have been carefully preserved as heirlooms from generation to generation; being made of very thin wood lacquered over, and kept each in a silken bag, they have been uninjured by the lapse of time.

During the Duke of Edinburgh's stay in Yedo, this company was engaged to give a performance in the Yashiki of the Prince of Kishiu, which has the reputation of being the handsomest palace in all Yedo. So far as I know, such an exhibition had never before been witnessed by foreigners, and it may be interesting to give an account of it. Opposite the principal reception-room, where his Royal Highness sat, and separated from it by a narrow courtyard, was a covered stage, approached from the green-room by a long gallery at an angle of forty-five degrees. Half a dozen musicians, clothed in dresses of ceremony, marched slowly down the gallery, and, having squatted down on the stage, bowed gravely. The performances then began. There was no scenery, nor stage appliances; the descriptions of the chorus or of the actors took their place. The dialogue and choruses are given in a nasal recitative, accompanied by the mouth-organ, flute, drum, and other classical instruments, and are utterly unintelligible. The ancient poetry is full of puns and plays upon words, and it was with no little difficulty that, with the assistance of a man of letters, I prepared beforehand the arguments of the different pieces.

The first play was entitled *Hachiman of the Bow.* Hachiman is

the name under which the Emperor Ojin (270—312 A.D.) was deified as the God of War. He is specially worshipped on account of his miraculous birth; his mother, the Empress Jingo, having, by the virtue of a magic stone which she wore at her girdle, borne him in her womb for three years, during which she made war upon and conquered the Coreans. The time of the plot is laid in the reign of the Emperor Uda the Second (1275—1289 A.D.). In the second month of the year pilgrims are flocking to the temple of Hachiman at Mount Otoko, between Osaka and Kiyôto. All this is explained by the chorus. A worshipper steps forth, sent by the Emperor, and delivers a congratulatory oration upon the peace and prosperity of the land. The chorus follows in the same strain: they sing the praises of Hachiman and of the reigning Emperor. An old man enters, bearing something which appears to be a bow in a brocade bag. On being asked who he is, the old man answers that he is an aged servant of the shrine, and that he wishes to present his mulberry-wood bow to the Emperor; being too humble to draw near to his Majesty, he has waited for this festival, hoping that an opportunity might present itself. He explains that with this bow, and with certain arrows made of the Artemisia, the heavenly gods pacified the world. On being asked to show his bow, he refuses; it is a mystic protector of the country, which in old days was overshadowed by the mulberry-tree. The peace which prevails in the land is likened to a calm at sea. The Emperor is the ship, and his subjects the water. The old man dwells upon the ancient worship of Hachiman, and relates how his mother, the Empress Jingo, sacrificed to the gods before invading Corea, and how the present prosperity of the country is to be attributed to the acceptance of those sacrifices. After having revealed himself as the god

Hachiman in disguise, the old man disappears. The worshipper, awe-struck, declares that he must return to Kiyôto and tell the Emperor what he has seen. The chorus announces that sweet music and fragrant perfumes issue from the mountain, and the piece ends with felicitations upon the visible favour of the gods, and especially of Hachiman.

The second piece was *Tsunémasa*. Tsunémasa was a hero of the twelfth century, who died in the civil wars; he was famous for his skill in playing on the *biwa*, a sort of four-stringed lute.

A priest enters, and announces that his name is Giyôkei, and that before he retired from the world he held high rank at court. He relates how Tsunémasa, in his childhood the favourite of the Emperor, died in the wars by the western seas. During his life-time the Emperor gave him a lute, called Sei-zan, "the Azure Mountain;" this lute at his death was placed in a shrine erected to his honour, and at his funeral music and plays were performed during seven days within the palace, by the special grace of the Emperor. The scene is laid at the shrine. The lonely and awe-some appearance of the spot is described. Although the sky is clear, the wind rustles through the trees like the sound of falling rain; and although it is now summer-time, the moonlight on the sand looks like hoar-frost. All nature is sad and downcast. The ghost appears, and sings that it is the spirit of Tsunémasa, and has come to thank those who have piously celebrated his obsequies. No one answers him, and the spirit vanishes, its voice becoming fainter and fainter, an unreal and illusory vision haunting the scenes amid which its life was spent. The priest muses on the portent. Is it a dream or a reality? Marvellous! The ghost, returning, speaks of former days, when it lived as a child in the palace, and received the Azure Mountain lute from the Emperor—

that lute with the four strings of which its hand was once so familiar, and the attraction of which now draws it from the grave. The chorus recites the virtues of Tsunémasa—his benevolence, justice, humanity, talents, and truth; his love of poetry and music; the trees, the flowers, the birds, the breezes, the moon—all had a charm for him. The ghost begins to play upon the Azure Mountain lute, and the sounds produced from the magical instrument are so delicate, that all think it is a shower falling from heaven. The priest declares that it is not rain, but the sound of the enchanted lute. The sound of the first and second strings is as the sound of gentle rain, or of the wind stirring the pine-trees; and the sound of the third and fourth strings is as the song of birds and pheasants calling to their young. A rhapsody in praise of music follows. Would that such strains could last for ever! The ghost bewails its fate that it cannot remain to play on, but must return whence it came. The priest addresses the ghost, and asks whether the vision is indeed the spirit of Tsunémasa. Upon this the ghost calls out in an agony of sorrow and terror at having been seen by mortal eyes, and bids that the lamps be put out: on its return to the abode of the dead it will suffer for having shown itself: it describes the fiery torments which will be its lot. Poor fool! it has been lured to its destruction, like the insect of summer that flies into the flame. Summoning the winds to its aid, it puts out the lights, and disappears.

The Suit of Feathers is the title of a very pretty conceit which followed. A fisherman enters, and in a long recitative describes the scenery at the sea-shore of Miwo, in the province of Suruga, at the foot of Fujiyama, the Peerless Mountain. The waves are still, and there is a great calm; the fishermen are all out plying

their trade. The speaker's name is Hakuriyô, a fisherman living in the pine-grove of Miwo. The rains are now over, and the sky is serene; the sun rises bright and red over the pine-trees and rippling sea; while last night's moon is yet seen faintly in the heaven. Even he, humble fisher though he be, is softened by the beauty of the nature which surrounds him. A breeze springs up, the weather will change; clouds and waves will succeed sunshine and calm; the fishermen must get them home again. No; it is but the gentle breath of spring, after all; it scarcely stirs the stout fir-trees, and the waves are hardly heard to break upon the shore. The men may go forth in safety. The fisherman then relates how, while he was wondering at the view, flowers began to rain from the sky, and sweet music filled the air, which was perfumed by a mystic fragrance. Looking up, he saw hanging on a pine-tree a fairy's suit of feathers, which he took home, and showed to a friend, intending to keep it as a relic in his house. A heavenly fairy makes her appearance, and claims the suit of feathers; but the fisherman holds to his treasure trove. She urges the impiety of his act—a mortal has no right to take that which belongs to the fairies. He declares that he will hand down the feather suit to posterity as one of the treasures of the country. The fairy bewails her lot; without her wings how can she return to heaven? She recalls the familiar joys of heaven, now closed to her; she sees the wild geese and the gulls flying to the skies, and longs for their power of flight; the tide has its ebb and its flow, and the sea-breezes blow whither they list; for her alone there is no power of motion, she must remain on earth. At last, touched by her plaint, the fisherman consents to return the feather suit, on condition that the fairy shall dance and play heavenly music for him. She consents, but must first obtain the feather suit, without which she cannot dance. The fisherman

refuses to give it up, lest she should fly away to heaven without redeeming her pledge. The fairy reproaches him for his want of faith: how should a heavenly being be capable of falsehood? He is ashamed, and gives her the feather suit, which she dons, and begins to dance, singing of the delights of heaven, where she is one of the fifteen attendants who minister to the moon. The fisherman is so transported with joy, that he fancies himself in heaven, and wishes to detain the fairy to dwell with him for ever. A song follows in praise of the scenery and of the Peerless Mountain capped with the snows of spring. When her dance is concluded, the fairy, wafted away by the sea-breeze, floats past the pine-grove to Ukishima and Mount Ashidaka, over Mount Fuji, till she is seen dimly like a cloud in the distant sky, and vanishes into thin air.

The last of the Nô was *The Little Smith*, the scene of which is laid in the reign of the Emperor Ichijô (987—1011 A.D.). A noble of the court enters, and proclaims himself to be Tachibana Michinari. He has been commanded by the Emperor, who has seen a dream of good omen on the previous night, to order a sword of the smith Munéchika of Sanjô. He calls Munéchika, who comes out, and, after receiving the order, expresses the difficulty he is in, having at that time no fitting mate to help him; he cannot forge a blade alone. The excuse is not admitted; the smith pleads hard to be saved from the shame of a failure. Driven to a compliance, there is nothing left for it but to appeal to the gods for aid. He prays to the patron god of his family, Inari Sama.[1] A man suddenly appears, and calls the smith; this man is the god Inari Sama in disguise. The smith

[1] The note at the end of the Story of the Grateful Foxes contains an account of Inari Sama, and explains how the foxes minister to him.

asks who is his visitor, and how does he know him by name. The stranger answers, "Thou hast been ordered to make a blade for the Emperor." "This is passing strange," says the smith. "I received the order but a moment since; how comest thou to know of it?" "Heaven has a voice which is heard upon the earth. Walls have ears, and stones tell tales.[1] There are no secrets in the world. The flash of the blade ordered by him who is above the clouds (the Emperor) is quickly seen. By the grace of the Emperor the sword shall be quickly made." Here follows the praise of certain famous blades, and an account of the part they played in history, with special reference to the sword which forms one of the regalia. The sword which the Emperor has sent for shall be inferior to none of these; the smith may set his heart at rest. The smith, awestruck, expresses his wonder, and asks again who is addressing him. He is bidden to go and deck out his anvil, and a supernatural power will help him. The visitor disappears in a cloud. The smith prepares his anvil, at the four corners of which he places images of the gods, while above it he stretches the straw rope and paper pendants hung up in temples to shut out foul or ill-omened influences. He prays for strength to make the blade, not for his own glory, but for the honour of the Emperor. A young man, a fox in disguise, appears, and helps Munéchika to forge the steel. The noise of the anvil resounds to heaven and over the earth. The chorus announces that the blade is finished; on one side is the mark of Munéchika, on the other is graven "The Little Fox" in clear characters.

The subjects of the Nô are all taken from old legends of the country; a shrine at Miwo, by the sea-shore, marks the spot where the suit of feathers was found, and the miraculously forged sword

[1] This is a literal translation of a Japanese proverb.

is supposed to be in the armoury of the Emperor to this day. The beauty of the poetry—and it is very beautiful—is marred by the want of scenery and by the grotesque dresses and make-up. In the *Suit of Feathers*, for instance, the fairy wears a hideous mask and a wig of scarlet elf locks: the suit of feathers itself is left entirely to the imagination; and the heavenly dance is a series of whirls, stamps, and jumps, accompanied by unearthly yells and shrieks; while the vanishing into thin air is represented by pirouettes something like the motion of a dancing dervish. The intoning of the recitative is unnatural and unintelligible, so much so that not even a highly educated Japanese could understand what is going on unless he were previously acquainted with the piece. This, however, is supposing that which is not, for the Nô are as familiarly known as the master-pieces of our own dramatists.

The classical severity of the Nô is relieved by the introduction between the pieces of light farces called Kiyôgen. The whole entertainment having a religious intention, the Kiyôgen stand to the Nô in the same relation as the small shrines to the main temple; they, too, are played for the propitiation of the gods, and for the softening of men's hearts. The farces are acted without wigs or masks; the dialogue is in the common spoken language, and there being no musical accompaniment it is quite easy to follow. The plots of the two farces which were played before the Duke of Edinburgh are as follows:—

In the *Ink Smearing* the hero is a man from a distant part of the country, who, having a petition to prefer, comes to the capital, where he is detained for a long while. His suit being at last successful, he communicates the joyful news to his servant, Tarô-kaja (the conventional name of the Leporello of these farces).

The two congratulate one another. To while away his idle hours during his sojourn at the capital the master has entered into a flirtation with a certain young lady: master and servant now hold a consultation as to whether the former should not go and take leave of her. Tarôkaja is of opinion that as she is of a very jealous nature, his master ought to go. Accordingly the two set out to visit her, the servant leading the way. Arrived at her house, the gentleman goes straight in without the knowledge of the lady, who, coming out and meeting Tarôkaja, asks after his master. He replies that his master is inside the house. She refuses to believe him, and complains that, for some time past, his visits have been few and far between. Why should he come now? Surely Tarôkaja is hoaxing her. The servant protests that he is telling the truth, and that his master really has entered the house. She, only half persuaded, goes in, and finds that my lord is indeed there. She welcomes him, and in the same breath upbraids him. Some other lady has surely found favour in his eyes. What fair wind has wafted him back to her? He replies that business alone has kept him from her; he hopes that all is well with her. With her, indeed, all is well, and there is no change; but she fears that his heart is changed. Surely, surely he has found mountains upon mountains of joy elsewhere; even now, perhaps, he is only calling on his way homeward from some haunt of pleasure. What pleasure can there be away from her? answers he. Indeed, his time has not been his own, else he would have come sooner. Why, then, did he not send his servant to explain? Tarôkaja here puts in his oar, and protests that, between running on errands and dancing attendance upon his lord, he has not had a moment to himself. "At any rate," says the master, "I must ask for your congratulations; for my suit, which was so important, has prospered."

The lady expresses her happiness, and the gentleman then bids his servant tell her the object of their visit. Tarôkaja objects to this; his lord had better tell his own story. While the two are disputing as to who shall speak, the lady's curiosity is aroused. "What terrible tale is this that neither of you dare tell? Pray let one or other of you speak." At last the master explains that he has come to take leave of her, as he must forthwith return to his own province. The girl begins to weep, and the gentleman following suit, the two shed tears in concert. She uses all her art to cajole him, and secretly produces from her sleeve a cup of water, with which she smears her eyes to imitate tears. He, deceived by the trick, tries to console her, and swears that as soon as he reaches his own country he will send a messenger to fetch her; but she pretends to weep all the more, and goes on rubbing her face with water. Tarôkaja, in the meanwhile, detects the trick, and, calling his master on one side, tells him what she is doing. The gentleman, however, refuses to believe him, and scolds him right roundly for telling lies. The lady calls my lord to her, and weeping more bitterly than ever, tries to coax him to remain. Tarôkaja slily fills another cup with ink and water, and substitutes it for the cup of clear water. She, all unconcerned, goes on smearing her face. At last she lifts her face, and her lover, seeing it all black and sooty, gives a start. What can be the matter with the girl's face? Tarôkaja, in an aside, explains what he has done. They determine to put her to shame. The lover, producing from his bosom a box containing a mirror, gives it to the girl, who, thinking that it is a parting gift, at first declines to receive it. It is pressed upon her; she opens the box and sees the reflection of her dirty face. Master and man burst out laughing. Furious, she smears Tarôkaja's face with the ink; he protests that he is not the author of the trick,

and the girl flies at her lover and rubs his face too. Both master and servant run off, pursued by the girl.

The second farce was shorter than the first, and was called *The Theft of the Sword.* A certain gentleman calls his servant Tarôkaja, and tells him that he is going out for a little diversion. Bidding Tarôkaja follow him, he sets out. On their way they meet another gentleman, carrying a handsome sword in his hand, and going to worship at the Kitano shrine at Kiyôto. Tarôkaja points out the beauty of the sword to his master, and says what a fine thing it would be if they could manage to obtain possession of it. Tarôkaja borrows his master's sword, and goes up to the stranger, whose attention is taken up by looking at the wares set out for sale in a shop. Tarôkaja lays his hand on the guard of the stranger's sword; and the latter, drawing it, turns round, and tries to cut the thief down. Tarôkaja takes to his heels, praying hard that his life may be spared. The stranger takes away the sword which Tarôkaja has borrowed from his master, and goes on his way to the shrine, carrying the two swords. Tarôkaja draws a long breath of relief when he sees that his life is not forfeited; but what account is he to give of his master's sword which he has lost. There is no help for it, he must go back and make a clean breast of it. His master is very angry; and the two, after consulting together, await the stranger's return from the shrine. The latter makes his appearance, and announces that he is going home. Tarôkaja's master falls upon the stranger from behind, and pinions him, ordering Tarôkaja to fetch a rope and bind him. The knave brings the cord; but, while he is getting it ready, the stranger knocks him over with his sword. His master calls out to him to get up quickly and bind the gentleman from behind, and not from before. Tarôkaja runs behind the struggling pair, but is so clumsy that he slips

the noose over his master's head by mistake, and drags him down. The stranger, seeing this, runs away laughing with the two swords. Tarôkaja, frightened at his blunder, runs off too, his master pursuing him off the stage. A general run off, be it observed, something like the "spill-and-pelt" scene in an English pantomime, is the legitimate and invariable termination of the Kiyôgen.

NOTE ON THE GAME OF FOOTBALL.

THE game of football is in great favour at the Japanese Court. The days on which it takes place are carefully noted in the "Daijôkwan Nishi," or Government Gazette. On the 25th of February, 1869, for instance, we find two entries: "The Emperor wrote characters of good omen," and "The game of football was played at the palace." The game was first introduced from China in the year of the Empress Kôkiyoku, in the middle of the seventh century. The Emperor Mommu, who reigned at the end of the same century, was the first emperor who took part in the sport. His Majesty Toba the Second became very expert at it, as also did the noble Asukai Chiujo, and from that time a sort of football club was formed at the palace. During the days of the extreme poverty of the Mikado and his Court, the Asukai family, notwithstanding their high rank, were wont to eke out their scanty income by giving lessons in the art of playing football.

THE WONDERFUL ADVENTURES OF FUNAKOSHI JIUYÉMON.

THE doughty deeds and marvellous experiences of Funakoshi Jiuyémon are perhaps, like those of Robin Hood and his Merry Men, rather traditional than historical; but even if all or part of the deeds which popular belief ascribes to him be false, his story conveys a true picture of manners and customs. Above all, the manner of the vengeance which he wreaked upon the wife who had dishonoured him, and upon her lover, shows the high importance which the Japanese attach to the sanctity of the marriage tie.

The 50th and 51st chapters of the "Legacy of Iyéyasu," already quoted, say: "If a married woman of the agricultural, artisan, or commercial class shall secretly have intercourse with another man, it is not necessary for the husband to enter a complaint against the persons thus confusing the great relation of mankind, but he may put them both to death. Nevertheless, should he slay one of them and

spare the other, his guilt is the same as that of the unrighteous persons.

"In the event, however, of advice being sought, the parties not having been slain, accede to the wishes of the complainant with regard to putting them to death or not.

"Mankind, in whose bodies the male and female elements induce a natural desire towards the same object, do not look upon such practices with aversion; and the adjudication of such cases is a matter of special deliberation and consultation.

"Men and women of the military class are expected to know better than to occasion disturbance by violating existing regulations; and such an one breaking the regulations by lewd, trifling, or illicit intercourse shall at once be punished, without deliberation or consultation. It is not the same in this case as in that of agriculturists, artisans, and traders."

As a criminal offence, adultery was, according to the ancient laws of Japan, punished by crucifixion. In more modern times it has been punished by decapitation and the disgraceful exposure of the head after death; but if the murder of the injured husband accompany the crime of adultery, then the guilty parties are crucified to this day. At the present time the husband is no longer allowed to take the law into his own hands: he must report the matter to the Government, and trust to the State to avenge his honour.

Sacred as the marriage tie is so long as it lasts, the law

which cuts it is curiously facile, or rather there is no law: a man may turn his wife out of doors, as it may suit his fancy. An example of this practice was shown in the story of "The Forty-seven Rônins." A husband has but to report the matter to his lord, and the ceremony of divorce is completed. Thus, in the days of the Shogun's power, a Hatamoto who had divorced his wife reported the matter to the Shogun. A Daimio's retainer reports the matter to his Prince.

The facility of divorce, however, seems to be but rarely taken advantage of: this is probably owing to the practice of keeping concubines. It has often been asked, Are the Japanese polygamists? The answer is, Yes and no. They marry but one wife; but a man may, according to his station and means, have one or more concubines in addition. The Emperor has twelve concubines, called Kisaki; and Iyéyasu, alluding forcibly to excess in this respect as *teterrima belli causa*, laid down that the princes might have eight, high officers five, and ordinary Samurai two handmaids. "In the olden times," he writes, "the downfall of castles and the overthrow of kingdoms all proceeded from this alone. Why is not the indulgence of passions guarded against?"

The difference between the position of the wife and that of the concubine is marked. The legitimate wife is to the handmaid as a lord is to his vassal. Concubinage being a

legitimate institution, the son of a handmaid is no bastard, nor is he in any way the child of shame; and yet, as a general rule, the son of the bondwoman is not heir with the son of the free, for the son of the wife inherits before the son of a concubine, even where the latter be the elder; and it frequently happens that a noble, having children by his concubines but none by his wife, selects a younger brother of his own, or even adopts the son of some relative, to succeed him in the family honours. The family line is considered to be thus more purely preserved. The law of succession is, however, extremely lax. Excellent personal merits will sometimes secure to the left-handed son the inheritance of his ancestors; and it often occurs that the son of a concubine, who is debarred from succeeding to his own father, is adopted as the heir of a relation or friend of even higher rank. When the wife of a noble has a daughter but no son, the practice is to adopt a youth of suitable family and age, who marries the girl and inherits as a son.

The principle of adoption is universal among all classes, from the Emperor down to his meanest subject; nor is the family line considered to have been broken because an adopted son has succeeded to the estates. Indeed, should a noble die without heir male, either begotten or adopted, his lands are forfeited to the State. It is a matter of care that the person adopted should be himself sprung from

a stock of rank suited to that of the family into which he is to be received.

Sixteen and upwards being considered the marriageable age for a man, it is not usual for persons below that age to adopt an heir; yet an infant at the point of death may adopt a person older than himself, that the family line may not become extinct.

An account of the marriage ceremony will be found in the Appendix upon the subject.

In the olden time, in the island of Shikoku[1] there lived one Funakoshi Jiuyémon, a brave Samurai and accomplished man, who was in great favour with the prince, his master. One day, at a drinking-bout, a quarrel sprung up between him and a brother-officer, which resulted in a duel upon the spot, in which Jiuyémon killed his adversary. When Jiuyémon awoke to a sense of what he had done, he was struck with remorse, and he thought to disembowel himself; but, receiving a private summons from his lord, he went to the castle, and the prince said to him—

"So it seems that you have been getting drunk and quarrelling, and that you have killed one of your friends; and

[1] *Shikoku*, one of the southern islands separated from the chief island of Japan by the beautiful "Inland Sea;" it is called *Shikoku*, or the "Four Provinces," because it is divided into the four provinces, *Awa*, *Sanuki*, *Iyo*, and *Tosa*.

now I suppose you will have determined to perform *hara kiri*. It is a great pity, and in the face of the laws I can do nothing for you openly. Still, if you will escape and fly from this part of the country for a while, in two years' time the affair will have blown over, and I will allow you to return."

And with these words the prince presented him with a fine sword, made by Sukésada,[1] and a hundred ounces of silver, and, having bade him farewell, entered his private apartments; and Jiuyémon, prostrating himself, wept tears of gratitude; then, taking the sword and the money, he went home and prepared to fly from the province, and secretly took leave of his relations, each of whom made him some parting present. These gifts, together with his own money, and what he had received from the prince, made up a sum of two hundred and fifty ounces of silver, with which and his Sukésada sword he escaped under cover of darkness, and went to a sea-port called Marugamé, in the province of Sanuki, where he proposed to wait for an opportunity of setting sail for Osaka. As ill luck would have it, the wind being contrary, he had to remain three days idle; but at last the wind changed; so he went down to the beach, thinking

1 *Sukésada*, a famous family of swordsmiths, belonging to the Bizen clan. The Bizen men are notoriously good armourers, and their blades fetch high prices. The sword of Jiuyémon is said to have been made by one of the Sukésada who lived about 290 years ago.

FUNAKOSHI JIUYEMON ON BOARD THE PIRATE SHIP.

that he should certainly find a junk about to sail; and as he was looking about him, a sailor came up, and said—

"If your honour is minded to take a trip to Osaka, my ship is bound thither, and I should be glad to take you with me as passenger."

"That's exactly what I wanted. I will gladly take a passage," replied Jiuyémon, who was delighted at the chance.

"Well then we must set sail at once, so please come on board without delay."

So Jiuyémon went with him and embarked; and as they left the harbour and struck into the open sea, the moon was just rising above the eastern hills, illumining the dark night like a noonday sun; and Jiuyémon, taking his place in the bows of the ship, stood wrapt in contemplation of the beauty of the scene.

Now it happened that the captain of the ship, whose name was Akagôshi Kuroyémon, was a fierce pirate, who, attracted by Jiuyémon's well-to-do appearance, had determined to decoy him on board, that he might murder and rob him; and while Jiuyémon was looking at the moon, the pirate and his companions were collected in the stern of the ship, taking counsel together in whispers as to how they might slay him. He, on the other hand, having for some time past fancied their conduct somewhat strange, bethought him that it was not prudent to lay aside his sword, so he went

towards the place where he had been sitting, and had left his weapon lying, to fetch it, when he was stopped by three of the pirates, who blocked up the gangway, saying—

"Stop, Sir Samurai! Unluckily for you, this ship in which you have taken a passage belongs to the pirate Akagôshi Kuroyémon. Come, sir! whatever money you may chance to have about you is our prize."

When Jiuyémon heard this he was greatly startled at first, but soon recovered himself, and, being an expert wrestler, kicked over two of the pirates, and made for his sword; but in the meanwhile Shichirohei, the younger brother of the pirate captain, had drawn the sword, and brought it towards him, saying—

"If you want your sword, here it is!" and with that he cut at him; but Jiuyémon avoided the blow, and closing with the ruffian, got back his sword. Ten of the pirates then attacked him with spear and sword; but he, putting his back against the bows of the ship, showed such good fight that he killed three of his assailants, and the others stood off, not daring to approach him. Then the pirate captain, Akagôshi Kuroyémon, who had been watching the fighting from the stern, seeing that his men stood no chance against Jiuyémon's dexterity, and that he was only losing them to no purpose, thought to shoot him with a matchlock. Even Jiuyémon,

brave as he was, lost heart when he saw the captain's gun pointed at him, and tried to jump into the sea; but one of the pirates made a dash at him with a boat-hook, and caught him by the sleeve; then Jiuyémon, in despair, took the fine Sukésada sword which he had received from his prince, and throwing it at his captor, pierced him through the breast so that he fell dead, and himself plunging into the sea swam for his life. The pirate captain shot at him and missed him, and the rest of the crew made every endeavour to seize him with their boat-hooks, that they might avenge the death of their mates; but it was all in vain, and Jiuyémon, having shaken off his clothes that he might swim the better, made good his escape. So the pirates threw the bodies of their dead comrades into the sea, and the captain was partly consoled for their loss by the possession of the Sukésada sword with which one of them had been transfixed.

As soon as Jiuyémon jumped over the ship's side, being a good swimmer, he took a long dive, which carried him well out of danger, and struck out vigorously; and although he was tired and distressed by his exertions, he braced himself up to greater energy, and faced the waves boldly. At last, in the far distance, to his great joy, he spied a light, for which he made, and found that it was a ship carrying lanterns marked with the badge of the governor of Osaka; so he hailed her, saying—

"I have fallen into great trouble among pirates: pray rescue me."

"Who and what are you?" shouted an officer, some forty years of age.

"My name is Funakoshi Jiuyémon, and I have unwittingly fallen in with pirates this night. I have escaped so far: I pray you save me, lest I die."

"Hold on to this, and come up," replied the other, holding out the butt end of a spear to him, which he caught hold of and clambered up the ship's side. When the officer saw before him a handsome gentleman, naked all but his loin-cloth, and with his hair all in disorder, he called to his servants to bring some of his own clothes, and, having dressed him in them, said—

"What clan do you belong to, sir?"

"Sir, I am a Rônin, and was on my way to Osaka; but the sailors of the ship on which I had embarked were pirates;" and so he told the whole story of the fight and of his escape.

"Well done, sir!" replied the other, astonished at his prowess. "My name is Kajiki Tozayémon, at your service. I am an officer attached to the governor of Osaka. Pray, have you any friends in that city?"

"No, sir, I have no friends there; but as in two years I shall be able to return to my own country, and re-enter my

lord's service, I thought during that time to engage in trade and live as a common wardsman."

"Indeed, that's a poor prospect! However, if you will allow me, I will do all that is in my power to assist you. Pray excuse the liberty I am taking in making such a proposal."

Jiuyémon warmly thanked Kajiki Tozayémon for his kindness; and so they reached Osaka without further adventures.

Jiuyémon, who had secreted in his girdle the two hundred and fifty ounces which he had brought with him from home, bought a small house, and started in trade as a vendor of perfumes, tooth-powder, combs, and other toilet articles; and Kajiki Tozayémon, who treated him with great kindness, and rendered him many services, prompted him, as he was a single man, to take to himself a wife. Acting upon this advice, he married a singing-girl, called O Hiyaku.[1]

Now this O Hiyaku, although at first she seemed very affectionately disposed towards Jiuyémon, had been, during the time that she was a singer, a woman of bad and profligate character; and at this time there was in Osaka a certain wrestler, named Takaségawa Kurobei, a very handsome man, with whom O Hiyaku fell desperately in love; so that at last, being by nature a passionate woman, she became unfaithful to Jiuyémon. The latter, little suspecting that anything was

[1] The O before women's names signifies "*Imperial*," and is simply an honorific.

amiss, was in the habit of spending his evenings at the house of his patron Kajiki Tozayémon, whose son, a youth of eighteen, named Tônoshin, conceived a great friendship for Jiuyémon, and used constantly to invite him to play a game at checkers; and it was on these occasions that O Hiyaku, profiting by her husband's absence, used to arrange her meetings with the wrestler Takaségawa.

One evening, when Jiuyémon, as was his wont, had gone out to play at checkers with Kajiki Tônoshin, O Hiyaku took advantage of the occasion to go and fetch the wrestler, and invite him to a little feast; and as they were enjoying themselves over their wine, O Hiyaku said to him—

"Ah! Master Takaségawa, how wonderfully chance favours us! and how pleasant these stolen interviews are! How much nicer still it would be if we could only be married. But, as long as Jiuyémon is in the way, it is impossible; and that is my one cause of distress."

"It's no use being in such a hurry. If you only have a patience, we shall be able to marry, sure enough. What you have got to look out for now is, that Jiuyémon does not find out what we are about. I suppose there is no chance of his coming home to-night, is there?"

"Oh dear, no! You need not be afraid. He is gone to Kajiki's house to play checkers; so he is sure to spend the night there."

And so the guilty couple went on gossiping, with their minds at ease, until at last they dropped off asleep.

In the meanwhile Jiuyémon, in the middle of his game at checkers, was seized with a sudden pain in his stomach, and said to Kajiki Tônoshin, "Young sir, I feel an unaccountable pain in my stomach. I think I had better go home, before it gets worse."

"That is a bad job. Wait a little, and I will give you some physic; but, at any rate, you had better spend the night here."

"Many thanks for your kindness," replied Jiuyémon; "but I had rather go home."

So he took his leave, and went off to his own house, bearing the pain as best he might. When he arrived in front of his own door, he tried to open it; but the lock was fastened, and he could not get in, so he rapped violently at the shutters to try and awaken his wife. When O Hiyaku heard the noise, she woke with a start, and roused the wrestler, saying to him in a whisper—

"Get up! get up! Jiuyémon has come back. You must hide as fast as possible."

"Oh dear! oh dear!" said the wrestler, in a great fright; "here's a pretty mess! Where on earth shall I hide myself?" and he stumbled about in every direction looking for a hiding-place, but found none.

Jiuyémon, seeing that his wife did not come to open the door, got impatient at last, and forced it open by unfixing the sliding shutter, and, entering the house, found himself face to face with his wife and her lover, who were both in such confusion that they did not know what to do. Jiuyémon, however, took no notice of them, but lit his pipe and sat smoking and watching them in silence. At last the wrestler, Takaségawa, broke the silence by saying—

"I thought, sir, that I should be sure to have the pleasure of finding you at home this evening, so I came out to call upon you. When I got here, the Lady O Hiyaku was so kind as to offer me some wine; and I drank a little more than was good for me, so that it got into my head, and I fell asleep. I must really apologize for having taken such a liberty in your absence; but, indeed, although appearances are against us, there has been nothing wrong."

"Certainly," said O Hiyaku, coming to her lover's support, "Master Takaségawa is not at all to blame. It was I who invited him to drink wine; so I hope you will excuse him."

Jiuyémon sat pondering the matter over in his mind for a moment, and then said to the wrestler, "You say that you are innocent; but, of course, that is a lie. It's no use trying to conceal your fault. However, next year I shall, in all probability, return to my own country, and then you may take O Hiyaku and do what you will with her: far

be it from me to care what becomes of a woman with such a stinking heart."

When the wrestler and O Hiyaku heard Jiuyémon say this quite quietly, they could not speak, but held their peace for very shame.

"Here, you Takaségawa," pursued he; "you may stop here to-night, if you like it, and go home to-morrow."

"Thank you, sir," replied the wrestler, "I am much obliged to you; but the fact is, that I have some pressing business in another part of the town, so, with your permission, I will take my leave;" and so he went out, covered with confusion.

As for the faithless wife, O Hiyaku, she was in great agitation, expecting to be severely reprimanded at least; but Jiuyémon took no notice of her, and showed no anger; only from that day forth, although she remained in his house as his wife, he separated himself from her entirely.

Matters went on in this way for some time, until at last, one fine day, O Hiyaku, looking out of doors, saw the wrestler Takaségawa passing in the street, so she called out to him—

"Dear me, Master Takaségawa, can that be you! What a long time it is since we have met! Pray come in, and have a chat."

"Thank you, I am much obliged to you; but as I do not

like the sort of scene we had the other day, I think I had rather not accept your invitation."

"Pray do not talk in such a cowardly manner. Next year, when Jiuyémon goes back to his own country, he is sure to give me this house, and then you and I can marry and live as happily as possible."

"I don't like being in too great a hurry to accept fair offers."[1]

"Nonsense! There's no need for showing such delicacy about accepting what is given you."

And as she spoke, she caught the wrestler by the hand and led him into the house. After they had talked together for some time, she said—

"Listen to me, Master Takaségawa. I have been thinking over all this for some time, and I see no help for it but to kill Jiuyémon and make an end of him."

"What do you want to do that for?"

"As long as he is alive, we cannot be married. What I propose is that you should buy some poison, and I will put it secretly into his food. When he is dead, we can be happy to our hearts' content."

At first Takaségawa was startled and bewildered by the audacity of their scheme; but forgetting the gratitude which

[1] The original is a proverbial expression like "Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes."

he owed to Jiuyémon for sparing his life on the previous occasion, he replied—

"Well, I think it can be managed. I have a friend who is a physician, so I will get him to compound some poison for me, and will send it to you. You must look out for a moment when your husband is not on his guard, and get him to take it."

Having agreed upon this, Takaségawa went away, and, having employed a physician to make up the poison, sent it to O Hiyaku in a letter, suggesting that the poison should be mixed up with a sort of macaroni, of which Jiuyémon was very fond. Having read the letter, she put it carefully away in a drawer of her cupboard, and waited until Jiuyémon should express a wish to eat some macaroni.

One day, towards the time of the New Year, when O Hiyaku had gone out to a party with a few of her friends, it happened that Jiuyémon, being alone in the house, was in want of some little thing, and, failing to find it anywhere, at last bethought himself to look for it in O Hiyaku's cupboard; and as he was searching amongst the odds and ends which it contained, he came upon the fatal letter. When he read the scheme for putting poison in his macaroni, he was taken aback, and said to himself, "When I caught those two beasts in their wickedness I spared them, because their blood would have defiled my sword; and now they are not

even grateful for my mercy. Their crime is beyond all power of language to express, and I will kill them together."

So he put back the letter in its place, and waited for his wife to come home. So soon as she made her appearance he said—

"You have come home early, O Hiyaku. I feel very dull and lonely this evening; let us have a little wine."

And as he spoke without any semblance of anger, it never entered O Hiyaku's mind that he had seen the letter; so she went about her household duties with a quiet mind.

The following evening, as Jiuyémon was sitting in his shop casting up his accounts, with his counting-board[1] in his hand, Takaségawa passed by, and Jiuyémon called out to him, saying—

"Well met, Takaségawa! I was just thinking of drinking a cup of wine to-night; but I have no one to keep me company, and it is dull work drinking alone. Pray come in, and drink a bout with me."

"Thank you, sir, I shall have much pleasure," replied the wrestler, who little expected what the other was aiming at; and so he went in, and they began to drink and feast.

"It's very cold to-night," said Jiuyémon, after a while;

[1] The *abacus*, or counting-board, is the means of calculation in use throughout the Continent from St. Petersburg to Peking, in Corea, Japan, and the Liukiu Islands.

"suppose we warm up a little macaroni, and eat it nice and hot. Perhaps, however, you do not like it?"

"Indeed, I am very fond of it, on the contrary."

"That is well. O Hiyaku, please go and buy a little for us."

"Directly," replied his wife, who hurried off to buy the paste, delighted at the opportunity for carrying out her murderous design upon her husband. As soon she had prepared it, she poured it into bowls and set it before the two men; but into her husband's bowl only she put poison. Jiuyémon, who well knew what she had done, did not eat the mess at once, but remained talking about this, that, and the other; and the wrestler, out of politeness, was obliged to wait also. All of a sudden, Jiuyémon cried out—

"Dear me! whilst we have been gossiping, the macaroni has been getting cold. Let us put it all together and warm it up again. As no one has put his lips to his bowl yet, it will all be clean; so none need be wasted." And with these words he took the macaroni that was in the three bowls, and, pouring it altogether into an iron pot, boiled it up again. This time Jiuyémon served out the food himself, and, setting it before his wife and the wrestler, said—

"There! make haste and eat it up before it gets cold."

Jiuyémon, of course, did not eat any of the mess; and the would-be murderers, knowing that sufficient poison had been originally put into Jiuyémon's bowl to kill them all three, and

that now the macaroni, having been well mixed up, would all be poisoned, were quite taken aback, and did not know what to do.

"Come! make haste, or it will be quite cold. You said you liked it, so I sent to buy it on purpose. O Hiyaku! come and make a hearty meal. I will eat some presently."

At this the pair looked very foolish, and knew not what to answer; at last the wrestler got up and said—

"I do not feel quite well. I must beg to take my leave; and, if you will allow me, I will come and accept your hospitality to-morrow instead."

"Dear me! I am sorry to hear you are not well. However, O Hiyaku, there will be all the more macaroni for you."

As for O Hiyaku, she put a bold face upon the matter, and replied that she had supped already, and had no appetite for any more.

Then Jiuyémon, looking at them both with a scornful smile, said—

"It seems that you, neither of you, care to eat this macaroni; however, as you, Takaségawa, are unwell, I will give you some excellent medicine;" and going to the cupboard, he drew out the letter, and laid it before the wrestler. When O Hiyaku and the wrestler saw that their wicked schemes had been brought to light, they were struck dumb with shame.

JIUYÉMON PUNISHES HIS WIFE AND THE WRESTLER.

Takaségawa, seeing that denial was useless, drew his dirk and cut at Jiuyémon; but he, being nimble and quick, dived under the wrestler's arm, and seizing his right hand from behind, tightened his grasp upon it until it became numbed, and the dirk fell to the ground; for, powerful man as the wrestler was, he was no match for Jiuyémon, who held him in so fast a grip that he could not move. Then Jiuyémon took the dirk which had fallen to the ground, and said—

"Oh! I thought that you, being a wrestler, would at least be a strong man, and that there would be some pleasure in fighting you; but I see that you are but a poor feckless creature, after all. It would have defiled my sword to have killed such an ungrateful hound with it; but luckily here is your own dirk, and I will slay you with that."

Takaségawa struggled to escape, but in vain; and O Hiyaku, seizing a large kitchen knife, attacked Jiuyémon; but he, furious, kicked her in the loins so violently that she fell powerless, then brandishing the dirk, he cleft the wrestler from the shoulder down to the nipple of his breast, and the big man fell in his agony. O Hiyaku, seeing this, tried to fly; but Jiuyémon, seizing her by the hair of the head, stabbed her in the bosom, and, placing her by her lover's side, gave her the death-blow.

On the following day, he sent in a report of what he had done to the governor of Osaka, and buried the corpses; and

from that time forth he remained a single man, and pursued his trade as a seller of perfumery and such-like wares; and his leisure hours he continued to spend as before, at the house of his patron, Kajiki Tozayémon.

One day, when Jiuyémon went to call upon Kajiki Tozayémon, he was told by the servant-maid, who met him at the door, that her master was out, but that her young master, Tônoshin, was at home; so, saying that he would go in and pay his respects to the young gentleman, he entered the house; and as he suddenly pushed open the sliding-door of the room in which Tônoshin was sitting, the latter gave a great start, and his face turned pale and ghastly.

"How now, young sir!" said Jiuyémon, laughing at him, "surely you are not such a coward as to be afraid because the sliding-doors are opened? That is not the way in which a brave Samurai should behave."

"Really I am quite ashamed of myself," replied the other, blushing at the reproof; "but the fact is that I had some reason for being startled. Listen to me, Sir Jiuyémon, and I will tell you all about it. To-day, when I went to the academy to study, there were a great number of my fellow-students gathered together, and one of them said that a ruinous old shrine, about two miles and a half to the east of this place, was the nightly resort of all sorts of hobgoblins, who have been playing pranks and bewitching the people for some time

past; and he proposed that we should all draw lots, and that the one upon whom the lot fell should go to-night and exorcise those evil beings; and further that, as a proof of his having gone, he should write his name upon a pillar in the shrine. All the rest agreed that this would be very good sport; so I, not liking to appear a coward, consented to take my chance with the rest; and, as ill luck would have it, the lot fell upon me. I was thinking over this as you came in, and so it was that, when you suddenly opened the door, I could not help giving a start."

"If you only think for a moment," said Jiuyémon, "you will see that there is nothing to fear. How can beasts[1] and hobgoblins exercise any power over men? However, do not let the matter trouble you. I will go in your place to-night, and see if I cannot get the better of these goblins, if any there be, having done which, I will write your name upon the pillar, so that everybody may think that you have been there."

"Oh! thank you: that will indeed be a service. You can dress yourself up in my clothes, and nobody will be the wiser. I shall be truly grateful to you."

So Jiuyémon having gladly undertaken the job, as soon as the night set in made his preparations, and went to the place indicated—an uncanny-looking, tumble-down, lonely old

[1] Foxes, badgers, and cats. See the stories respecting their tricks.

shrine, all overgrown with moss and rank vegetation. However, Jiuyémon, who was afraid of nothing, cared little for the appearance of the place, and having made himself as comfortable as he could in so dreary a spot, sat down on the floor, lit his pipe, and kept a sharp look-out for the goblins. He had not been waiting long before he saw a movement among the bushes; and presently he was surrounded by a host of elfish-looking creatures, of all shapes and kinds, who came and made hideous faces at him. Jiuyémon quietly knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and then, jumping up, kicked over first one and then another of the elves, until several of them lay sprawling in the grass; and the rest made off, greatly astonished at at this unexpected reception. When Jiuyémon took his lantern and examined the fallen goblins attentively, he saw that they were all Tônoshin's fellow-students, who had painted their faces, and made themselves hideous, to frighten their companion, whom they knew to be a coward: all they got for their pains, however, was a good kicking from Jiuyémon, who left them groaning over their sore bones, and went home chuckling to himself at the result of the adventure.

The fame of this exploit soon became noised about Osaka, so that all men praised Jiuyémon's courage; and shortly after this he was elected chief of the Otokodaté,[1] or friendly society of the wardsmen, and busied himself no longer with his

[1] See the Introduction to the Story of Chôbei of Bandzuin.

FUNAKOSHI JIUYÉMON AND THE GOBLINS.

trade, but lived on the contributions of his numerous apprentices.

Now Kajiki Tônoshin was in love with a singing-girl named Kashiku, upon whom he was in the habit of spending a great deal of money. She, however, cared nothing for him, for she had a sweetheart named Hichirobei, whom she used to contrive to meet secretly, although, in order to support her parents, she was forced to become the mistress of Tônoshin. One evening, when the latter was on guard at the office of his chief, the Governor of Osaka, Kashiku sent word privately to Hichirobei, summoning him to go to her house, as the coast would be clear.

While the two were making merry over a little feast, Tônoshin, who had persuaded a friend to take his duty for him on the plea of urgent business, knocked at the door, and Kashiku, in a great fright, hid her lover in a long clothes-box, and went to let in Tônoshin, who, on entering the room and seeing the litter of the supper lying about, looked more closely, and perceived a man's sandals on which, by the light of a candle, he saw the figure seven.[1] Tônoshin had heard some ugly reports of Kashiku's proceedings with this man Hichirobei, and when he saw this proof before his eyes he grew very angry; but he suppressed his feelings, and, pointing to the wine-cups and bowls, said—

[1] *Hichi*, the first half of *Hichirobei*, signifies seven.

"Whom have you been feasting with to-night?"

"Oh!" replied Kashiku, who, notwithstanding her distress, was obliged to invent an answer, "I felt so dull all alone here, that I asked an old woman from next door to come in and drink a cup of wine with me, and have a chat."

All this while Tônoshin was looking for the hidden lover; but, as he could not see him, he made up his mind that Kashiku must have let him out by the back door; so he secreted one of the sandals in his sleeve as evidence, and, without seeming to suspect anything, said—

"Well, I shall be very busy this evening, so I must go home."

"Oh! won't you stay a little while? It is very dull here, when I am all alone without you. Pray stop and keep me company."

But Tônoshin made no reply, and went home. Then Kashiku saw that one of the sandals was missing, and felt certain that he must have carried it off as proof; so she went in great trouble to open the lid of the box, and let out Hichirobei. When the two lovers talked over the matter, they agreed that, as they both were really in love, let Tônoshin kill them if he would, they would gladly die together: they would enjoy the present; let the future take care of itself.

The following morning Kashiku sent a messenger to Tôno-

shin to implore his pardon; and he, being infatuated by the girl's charms, forgave her, and sent a present of thirty ounces of silver to her lover, Hichirobei, on the condition that he was never to see her again; but, in spite of this, Kashiku and Hichirobei still continued their secret meetings.

It happened that Hichirobei, who was a gambler by profession, had an elder brother called Chôbei, who kept a wine-shop in the Ajikawa-street, at Osaka; so Tônoshin thought that he could not do better than depute Jiuyémon to go and seek out this man Chôbei, and urge him to persuade his younger brother to give up his relations with Kashiku; acting upon this resolution, he went to call upon Jiuyémon, and said to him—

"Sir Jiuyémon, I have a favour to ask of you in connection with that girl Kashiku, whom you know all about. You are aware that I paid thirty ounces of silver to her lover Hichirobei to induce him to give up going to her house; but, in spite of this, I cannot help suspecting that they still meet one another. It seems that this Hichirobei has an elder brother—one Chôbei; now, if you would go to this man and tell him to reprove his brother for his conduct, you would be doing me a great service. You have so often stood my friend, that I venture to pray you to oblige me in this matter, although I feel that I am putting you to great inconvenience."

Jiuyémon, out of gratitude for the kindness which he had received at the hands of Kajiki Tozayémon, was always willing to serve Tônoshin; so he went at once to find out Chôbei, and said to him—

"My name, sir, is Jiuyémon, at your service; and I have come to beg your assistance in a matter of some delicacy."

"What can I do to oblige you, sir?" replied Chôbei, who felt bound to be more than usually civil, as his visitor was the chief of the Otokodaté.

"It is a small matter, sir," said Jiuyémon. "Your younger brother Hichirobei is intimate with a woman named Kashiku, whom he meets in secret. Now, this Kashiku is the mistress of the son of a gentleman to whom I am under great obligation: he bought her of her parents for a large sum of money, and, besides this, he paid your brother thirty ounces of silver some time since, on condition of his separating himself from the girl; in spite of this, it appears that your brother continues to see her, and I have come to beg that you will remonstrate with your brother on his conduct, and make him give her up."

"That I certainly will. Pray do not be uneasy; I will soon find means to put a stop to my brother's bad behaviour."

And so they went on talking of one thing and another, until Jiuyémon, whose eyes had been wandering about the

room, spied out a very long dirk lying on a cupboard, and all at once it occurred to him that this was the very sword which had been a parting gift to him from his lord: the hilt, the mountings, and the tip of the scabbard were all the same, only the blade had been shortened and made into a long dirk. Then he looked more attentively at Chôbei's features, and saw that he was no other than Akagôshi Kuroyémon, the pirate chief. Two years had passed by, but he could not forget that face.

Jiuyémon would have liked to have arrested him at once; but thinking that it would be a pity to give so vile a robber a chance of escape, he constrained himself, and, taking his leave, went straightway and reported the matter to the Governor of Osaka. When the officers of justice heard of the prey that awaited them, they made their preparations forthwith. Three men of the secret police went to Chôbei's wine-shop, and, having called for wine, pretended to get up a drunken brawl; and as Chôbei went up to them and tried to pacify them, one of the policemen seized hold of him, and another tried to pinion him. It at once flashed across Chôbei's mind that his old misdeeds had come to light at last, so with a desperate effort he shook off the two policemen and knocked them down, and, rushing into the inner room, seized the famous Sukésada sword and sprang upstairs. The three policemen, never thinking that he could escape,

mounted the stairs close after him; but Chôbei with a terrible cut cleft the front man's head in sunder, and the other two fell back appalled at their comrade's fate. Then Chôbei climbed on to the roof, and, looking out, perceived that the house was surrounded on all sides by armed men. Seeing this, he made up his mind that his last moment was come, but, at any rate, he determined to sell his life dearly, and to die fighting; so he stood up bravely, when one of the officers, coming up from the roof of a neighbouring house, attacked him with a spear; and at the same time several other soldiers clambered up. Chôbei, seeing that he was overmatched, jumped down, and before the soldiers below had recovered from their surprise he had dashed through their ranks, laying about him right and left, and cutting down three men. At top speed, he fled, with his pursuers close behind him; and, seeing the broad river ahead of him, jumped into a small boat that lay moored there, of which the boatmen, frightened at the sight of his bloody sword, left him in undisputed possession. Chôbei pushed off, and sculled vigorously into the middle of the river; and the officers—there being no other boat near—were for a moment baffled. One of them, however, rushing down the river bank, hid himself on a bridge, armed with a spear, and lay in wait for Chôbei to pass in his boat; but when the little boat came up, he missed his aim, and only scratched Chôbei's elbow; and he, seizing the spear, dragged

down his adversary into the river, and killed him as he was struggling in the water; then, sculling for his life, he gradually drew near to the sea. The other officers in the mean time had secured ten boats, and, having come up with Chôbei, surrounded him; but he, having formerly been a pirate, was far better skilled in the management of a boat than his pursuers, and had no great difficulty in eluding them; so at last he pushed out to sea, to the great annoyance of the officers, who followed him closely.

Then Jiuyémon, who had come up, said to one of the officers on the shore—

"Have you caught him yet?"

"No; the fellow is so brave and so cunning that our men can do nothing with him."

"He's a determined ruffian, certainly. However, as the fellow has got my sword, I mean to get it back by fair means or foul: will you allow me to undertake the job of seizing him?"

"Well, you may try; and you will have officers to assist you, if you are in peril."

Jiuyémon, having received this permission, stripped off his clothes and jumped into the sea, carrying with him a policeman's mace, to the great astonishment of all the bystanders. When he got near Chôbei's boat, he dived and came up alongside, without the pirate perceiving him until he had

clambered into the boat. Chôbei had the good Sukésada sword, and Jiuyémon was armed with nothing but a mace; but Chôbei, on the other hand, was exhausted with his previous exertions, and was taken by surprise at a moment when he was thinking of nothing but how he should scull away from the pursuing boats; so it was not long before Jiuyémon mastered and secured him.

For this feat, besides recovering his Sukésada sword, Jiuyémon received many rewards and great praise from the Governor of Osaka. But the pirate Chôbei was cast into prison.

Hichirobei, when he heard of his brother's capture, was away from home; but seeing that he too would be sought for, he determined to escape to Yedo at once, and travelled along the Tôkaidô, the great highroad, as far as Kuana. But the secret police had got wind of his movements, and one of them was at his heels disguised as a beggar, and waiting for an opportunity to seize him.

Hichirobei in the meanwhile was congratulating himself on his escape; and, little suspecting that he would be in danger so far away from Osaka, he went to a house of pleasure, intending to divert himself at his ease. The policeman, seeing this, went to the master of the house and said—

"The guest who has just come in is a notorious thief, and I am on his track, waiting to arrest him. Do you watch for

the moment when he falls asleep, and let me know. Should he escape, the blame will fall upon you."

The master of the house, who was greatly taken aback, consented of course; so he told the woman of the house to hide Hichirobei's dirk, and as soon as the latter, wearied with his journey, had fallen asleep, he reported it to the policeman, who went upstairs, and having bound Hichirobei as he lay wrapped up in his quilt, led him back to Osaka to be imprisoned with his brother.

When Kashiku became aware of her lover's arrest, she felt certain that it was the handiwork of Jiuyémon; so she determined to kill him, were it only that she might die with Hichirobei. So hiding a kitchen knife in the bosom of her dress, she went at midnight to Jiuyémon's house, and looked all round to see if there were no hole or cranny by which she might slip in unobserved; but every door was carefully closed, so she was obliged to knock at the door and feign an excuse.

"Let me in! let me in! I am a servant-maid in the house of Kajiki Tozayémon, and am charged with a letter on most pressing business to Sir Jiuyémon."

Hearing this, one of Jiuyémon's servants, thinking her tale was true, rose and opened the door; and Kashiku, stabbing him in the face, ran past him into the house. Inside she met another apprentice, who had got up, aroused by the noise;

him too she stabbed in the belly, but as he fell he cried out to Jiuyémon, saying—

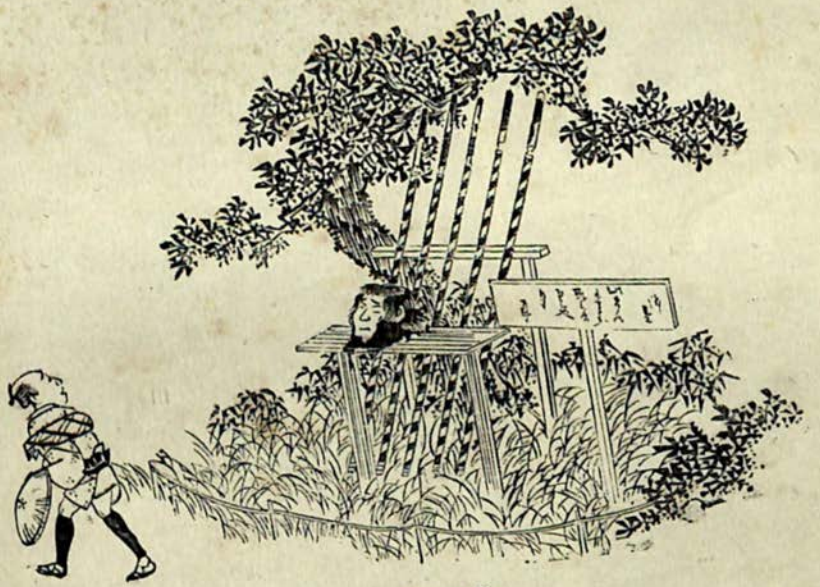
"Father, father![1] take care! Some murderous villain has broken into the house."

And Kashiku, desperate, stopped his further utterance by cutting his throat. Jiuyémon, hearing his apprentice cry out, jumped up, and, lighting his night-lamp, looked about him in the half-gloom, and saw Kashiku with the bloody knife, hunting for him that she might kill him. Springing upon her before she saw him, he clutched her right hand, and, having secured her, bound her with cords so that she could not move. As soon as he had recovered from his surprise, he looked about him, and searched the house, when, to his horror, he found one of his apprentices dead, and the other lying bleeding from a frightful gash across the face. With the first dawn of day, he reported the affair to the proper authorities, and gave Kashiku in custody. So, after due examination, the two pirate brothers and the girl Kashiku were executed, and their heads were exposed together.[2]

Now the fame of all the valiant deeds of Jiuyémon having reached his own country, his lord ordered that he should be pardoned for his former offence, and return to his allegiance;

[1] The apprentice addresses his patron as "father."

[2] The exposure of the head, called *Gokumon*, is a disgraceful addition to the punishment of beheading. A document, placed on the execution-ground, sets forth the crime which has called forth the punishment.



"GOKUMON."

so, after thanking Kajiki Tozayémon for the manifold favours which he had received at his hands, he went home, and became a Samurai as before.

The fat wrestlers of Japan, whose heavy paunches and unwieldy, puffy limbs, however much they may be admired by their own country-people, form a striking contrast to our Western notions of training, have attracted some attention from travellers; and those who are interested in athletic sports may care to learn something about them.

The first historical record of wrestling occurs in the sixth year of the Emperor Suinin (B.C. 24), when one Taima no Kéhaya, a noble of great stature and strength, boasting that there was not his match under heaven, begged the Emperor that his strength might be put to the test. The Emperor accordingly caused the challenge to be proclaimed; and one Nomi no Shikuné answered it, and having wrestled with Kéhaya, kicked him in the ribs and broke his bones, so that he died. After this Shikuné was promoted to high office, and became further famous in Japanese history as having substituted earthen images for the living men who, before his time, used to be buried with the coffin of the Mikado.

In the year 858 A.D. the throne of Japan was wrestled for. The Emperor Buntoku had two sons, called Koréshito and

Korétaka, both of whom aspired to the throne. Their claims were decided in a wrestling-match, in which one Yoshirô was the champion of Koréshito, and Natora the champion of Korétaka. Natora having been defeated, Koreshito ascended his father's throne under the style of Seiwa.

In the eighth century, when Nara was the capital of Japan, the Emperor Shômu instituted wrestling as part of the ceremonies of the autumn festival of the Five Grains, or Harvest Home; and as the year proved a fruitful one, the custom was continued as auspicious. The strong men of the various provinces were collected, and one Kiyobayashi was proclaimed the champion of Japan. Many a brave and stout man tried a throw with him, but none could master him. Rules of the ring were now drawn up; and in order to prevent disputes, Kiyobayashi was appointed by the Emperor to be the judge of wrestling-matches, and was presented, as a badge of his office, with a fan, upon which were inscribed the words the "Prince of Lions." The wrestlers were divided into wrestlers of the eastern and of the western provinces, Omi being taken as the centre province. The eastern wrestlers wore in their hair the badge of the hollyhock; the western wrestlers took for their sign the gourd-flower. Hence the passage leading up to the wrestling-stage was called the "Flower Path." Forty-eight various falls were fixed upon as fair—twelve throws, twelve lifts, twelve twists, and twelve throws over

A WRESTLING MATCH.

the back. All other throws not included in these were foul, and it was the duty of the umpire to see that no unlawful tricks were resorted to. It was decided that the covered stage should be composed of sixteen rice-bales, in the shape of one huge bale, supported by four pillars at the four points of the compass, each pillar being painted a different colour, thus, together with certain paper pendants, making up five colours, to symbolize the Five Grains.

The civil wars by which the country was disturbed for a while put a stop to the practice of wrestling; but when peace was restored it was proposed to re-establish the athletic games, and the umpire Kiyobayashi, the "Prince of Lions," was sought for; but he had died or disappeared, and could not be found, and there was no umpire forthcoming. The various provinces were searched for a man who might fill his place, and one Yoshida Iyétsugu, a Rônin of the province of Echizen, being reported to be well versed in the noble science, was sent for to the capital, and proved to be a pupil of Kiyobayashi. The Emperor, having approved him, ordered that the fan of the "Prince of Lions" should be made over to him, and gave him the title of Bungo no Kami, and commanded that his name in the ring should be Oi-Kazé, the "Driving Wind." Further, as a sign that there should not be two styles of wrestling, a second fan was given to him, bearing the inscription, "A single flavour is a beautiful

custom." The right of acting as umpire in wrestling-matches was vested in his family, that the "Driving Wind" might for future generations preside over athletic sports. In ancient days, the prizes for the three champion wrestlers were a bow, a bowstring, and an arrow: these are still brought into the ring, and, at the end of the bout, the successful competitors go through a variety of antics with them.

To the champion wrestlers—to two or three men only in a generation—the family of the "Driving Wind" awards the privilege of wearing a rope-girdle. In the time of the Shogunate these champions used to wrestle before the Shogun.

At the beginning of the 17th century (A.D. 1606) wrestling-matches, as forming a regular part of a religious ceremony, were discontinued. They are still held, however, at the shrines of Kamo, at Kiyôto, and of Kasuga, in Yamato. They are also held at Kamakura every year, and at the shrines of the patron saints of the various provinces, in imitation of the ancient customs.

In the year 1623 one Akashi Shiganosuké obtained leave from the Government to hold public wrestling-matches in the streets of Yedo. In the year 1644 was held the first wrestling-match for the purpose of raising a collection for building a temple. This was done by the priests of Kofukuji, in Yamashiro. In the year 1660 the same expedient was resorted to in Yedo, and the custom of getting up wrest-

CHAMPION WRESTLER.

ling-matches for the benefit of temple funds holds good to this day.

The following graphic description of a Japanese wrestling-match is translated from the "Yedo Hanjôki":—

"From daybreak till eight in the morning a drum is beaten to announce that there will be wrestling. The spectators rise early for the sight. The adversaries having been settled, the wrestlers enter the ring from the east and from the west. Tall stalwart men are they, with sinews and bones of iron. Like the Gods Niô,[1] they stand with their arms akimbo, and, facing one another, they crouch in their strength. The umpire watches until the two men draw their breath at the same time, and with his fan gives the signal. They jump up and close with one another, like tigers springing on their prey, or dragons playing with a ball. Each is bent on throwing the other by twisting or by lifting him. It is no mere trial of brute strength; it is a tussle of skill against skill. Each of the forty-eight throws is tried in turn. From left to right, and from right to left, the umpire hovers about, watching for the victory to declare itself. Some of the spectators back the east, others back the west. The patrons of the ring are so excited that they feel the strength tingling within them; they clench their fists, and watch their men, without so much as blinking their eyes.

[1] The Japanese Gog and Magog.

At last one man, east or west, gains the advantage, and the umpire lifts his fan in token of victory. The plaudits of the bystanders shake the neighbourhood, and they throw their clothes or valuables into the ring, to be redeemed afterwards in money; nay, in his excitement, a man will even tear off his neighbour's jacket and throw it in."

Before beginning their tussle, the wrestlers work up their strength by stamping their feet and slapping their huge thighs. This custom is derived from the following tale of the heroic or mythological age :—

After the seven ages of the heavenly gods came the reign of Tensho Daijin, the Sun Goddess, and first Empress of Japan. Her younger brother, Sosanöô no Mikoto, was a mighty and a brave hero, but turbulent, and delighted in hunting the deer and the boar. After killing these beasts, he would throw their dead bodies into the sacred hall of his sister, and otherwise defile her dwelling. When he had done this several times, his sister was angry, and hid in the cave called the Rock Gate of Heaven; and when her face was not seen, there was no difference between the night and the day. The heroes who served her, mourning over this, went to seek her; but she placed a huge stone in front of the cave, and would not come forth. The heroes, seeing this, consulted together, and danced and played antics before the cave to lure her out. Tempted by curiosity to see the sight, she opened

the gate a little and peeped out. Then the hero Tajikaraô, or "Great Strength," clapping his hands and stamping his feet, with a great effort grasped and threw down the stone door, and the heroes fetched back the Sun Goddess.[1] As Tajikaraô is the patron god of Strength, wrestlers, on entering the ring, still commemorate his deed by clapping their hands and stamping their feet as a preparation for putting forth their strength.

The great Daimios are in the habit of attaching wrestlers to their persons, and assigning to them a yearly portion of rice. It is usual for these athletes to take part in funeral or wedding processions, and to escort the princes on journeys. The rich wardsmen or merchants give money to their favourite wrestlers, and invite them to their houses to drink wine and feast. Though low, vulgar fellows, they are allowed something of the same familiarity which is accorded to prize-fighters, jockeys, and the like, by their patrons in our own country.

The Japanese wrestlers appear to have no regular system of training; they harden their naturally powerful limbs by much beating, and by butting at wooden posts with their shoulders. Their diet is stronger than that of the ordinary Japanese, who rarely touch meat.

[1] The author of the history called "Kokushi Riyaku" explains this fable as being an account of the first eclipse.

THE ETA MAIDEN AND THE HATAMOTO.

It will be long before those who were present at the newly opened port of Kôbé on the 4th of February, 1868, will forget that day. The civil war was raging, and the foreign Legations, warned by the flames of burning villages, no less than by the flight of the Shogun and his ministers, had left Osaka, to take shelter at Kôbé, where they were not, as at the former place, separated from their ships by more than twenty miles of road, occupied by armed troops in a high state of excitement, with the alternative of crossing in tempestuous weather a dangerous bar, which had already taken much valuable life. It was a fine winter's day, and the place was full of bustle, and of the going and coming of men busy with the care of housing themselves and their goods and chattels. All of a sudden, a procession of armed men, belonging to the Bizen clan, was seen to leave the town, and to advance along the high road leading to Osaka; and without apparent reason—it was said afterwards that two

Frenchmen had crossed the line of march—there was a halt, a stir, and a word of command given. Then the little clouds of white smoke puffed up, and the sharp "ping" of the rifle bullets came whizzing over the open space, destined for a foreign settlement, as fast as the repeating breech-loaders could be discharged. Happily, the practice was very bad; for had the men of Bizen been good shots, almost all the principal foreign officials in the country, besides many merchants and private gentlemen, must have been killed: as it was, only two or three men were wounded. If they were bad marksmen, however, they were mighty runners; for they soon found that they had attacked a hornets' nest. In an incredibly short space of time, the guards of the different Legations and the sailors and marines from the ships of war were in hot chase after the enemy, who were scampering away over the hills as fast as their legs could carry them, leaving their baggage ingloriously scattered over the road, as many a cheap lacquered hat and flimsy paper cartridge-box, preserved by our Blue Jackets as trophies, will testify. So good was the stampede, that the enemy's loss amounted only to one aged coolie, who, being too decrepit to run, was taken prisoner, after having had seventeen revolver shots fired at him without effect; and the only injury that our men inflicted was upon a solitary old woman, who was accidently shot through the leg.

If it had not been for the serious nature of the offence given, which was an attack upon the flags of all the treaty Powers, and for the terrible retribution which was of necessity exacted, the whole affair would have been recollected chiefly for the ludicrous events which it gave rise to. The mounted escort of the British Legation executed a brilliant charge of cavalry down an empty road; a very pretty line of skirmishers along the fields fired away a great deal of ammunition with no result; earthworks were raised, and Kôbé was held in military occupation for three days, during which there were alarms, cutting-out expeditions with armed boats, steamers seized, and all kinds of martial effervescence. In fact, it was like fox-hunting: it had "all the excitement of war, with only ten per cent. of the danger."

The first thought of the kind-hearted doctor of the British Legation was for the poor old woman who had been wounded, and was bemoaning herself piteously. When she was carried in, a great difficulty arose, which, I need hardly say, was overcome; for the poor old creature belonged to the Etas, the Pariah race, whose presence pollutes the house even of the poorest and humblest Japanese; and the native servants strongly objected to her being treated as a human being, saying that the Legation would be for ever defiled if she were admitted within its sacred precincts. No account of Japanese society would be complete without a notice of

the Etas; and the following story shows well, I think, the position which they hold.

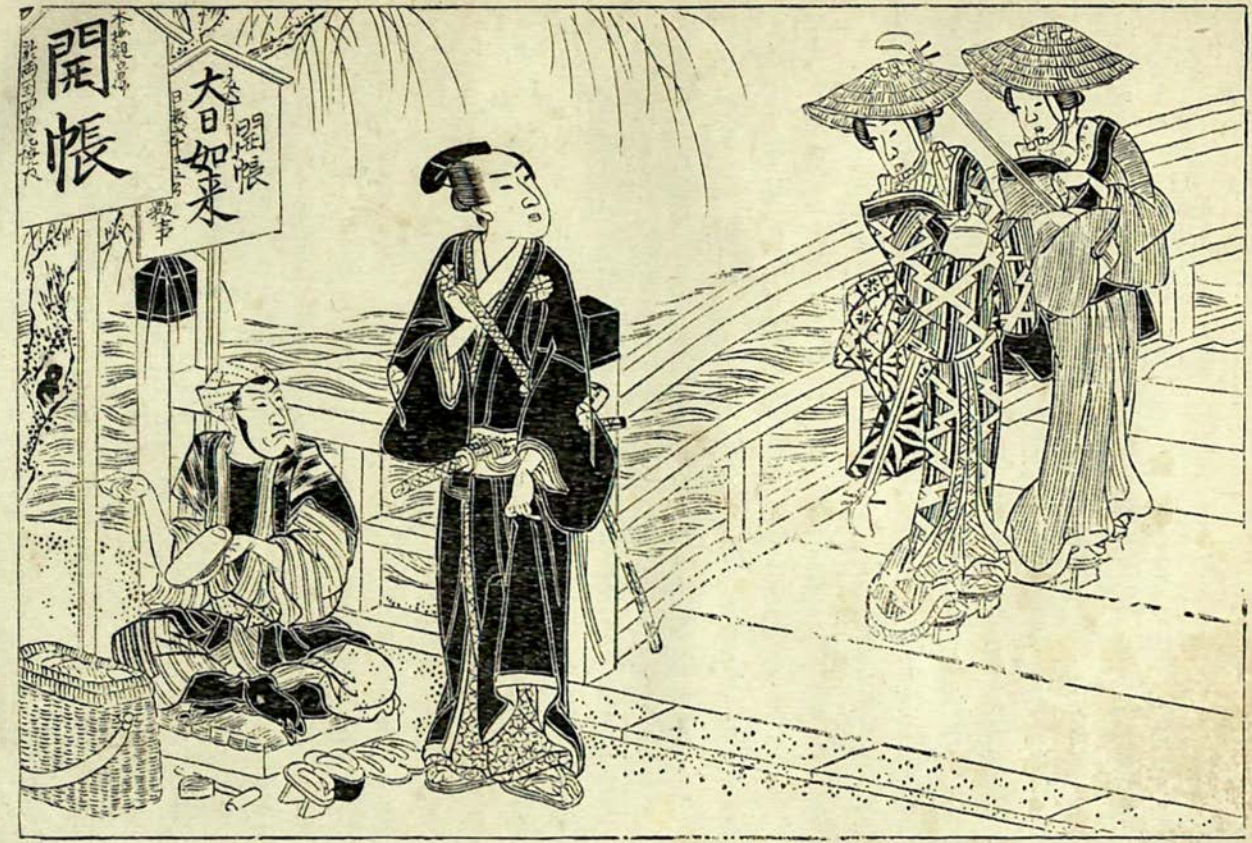
Their occupation is to slay beasts, work leather, attend upon criminals, and do other degrading work. Several accounts are given of their origin; the most probable of which is, that when Buddhism, the tenets of which forbid the taking of life, was introduced, those who lived by the infliction of death became accursed in the land, their trade being made hereditary, as was the office of executioner in some European countries. Another story is, that they are the descendants of the Tartar invaders left behind by Kublai Khan. Some further facts connected with the Etas are given in a note at the end of the tale.

Once upon a time, some two hundred years ago, there lived at a place called Honjô, in Yedo, a Hatamoto named Takoji Genzaburô; his age was about twenty-four or twenty-five, and he was of extraordinary personal beauty. His official duties made it incumbent on him to go to the Castle by way of the Adzuma Bridge, and here it was that a strange adventure befel him. There was a certain Eta, who used to earn his living by going out every day to the Adzuma Bridge, and mending the sandals of the passers-by. When-

ever Genzaburô crossed the bridge, the Eta used always to bow to him. This struck him as rather strange; but one day when Genzaburô was out alone, without any retainers following him, and was passing the Adzuma Bridge, the thong of his sandal suddenly broke: this annoyed him very much; however, he recollected the Eta cobbler who always used to bow to him so regularly, so he went to the place where he usually sat, and ordered him to mend his sandal, saying to him, "Tell me why it is that every time that I pass by this bridge, you salute me so respectfully."

When the Eta heard this, he was put out of countenance, and for a while he remained silent; but at last taking courage, he said to Genzaburô, "Sir, having been honoured with your commands, I am quite put to shame. I was originally a gardener, and used to go to your honour's house and lend a hand in trimming up the garden. In those days your honour was very young, and I myself little better than a child; and so I used to play with your honour, and received many kindnesses at your hands. My name, sir, is Chokichi. Since those days I have fallen by degrees into dissolute habits, and little by little have sunk to be the vile thing that you now see me."

When Genzaburô heard this he was very much surprised, and, recollecting his old friendship for his playmate, was



GENZABURÔ'S MEETING WITH THE ETA MAIDEN.

filled with pity, and said, "Surely, surely, you have fallen very low. Now all you have to do is to persevere and use your utmost endeavours to find a means of escape from the class into which you have fallen, and become a wardsman again. Take this sum: small as it is, let it be a foundation for more to you." And with these words he took ten riyos out of his pouch and handed them to Chokichi, who at first refused to accept the present, but, when it was pressed upon him, received it with thanks. Genzaburô was leaving him to go home, when two wandering singing-girls came up and spoke to Chokichi; so Genzaburô looked to see what the two women were like. One was a woman of some twenty years of age, and the other was a peerlessly beautiful girl of sixteen; she was neither too fat nor too thin, neither too tall nor too short; her face was oval, like a melon-seed, and her complexion fair and white; her eyes were narrow and bright, her teeth small and even; her nose was aquiline, and her mouth delicately formed, with lovely red lips; her eyebrows were long and fine; she had a profusion of long black hair; she spoke modestly, with a soft sweet voice; and when she smiled, two lovely dimples appeared in her cheeks; in all her movements she was gentle and refined. Genzaburô fell in love with her at first sight; and she, seeing what a handsome man he was, equally fell in love with him; so that the woman that was with her, perceiving

that they were struck with one another, led her away as fast as possible.

Genzaburô remained as one stupefied, and, turning to Chokichi, said, "Are you acquainted with those two women who came up just now?"

"Sir," replied Chokichi, "those are two women of our people. The elder woman is called O Kuma, and the girl, who is only sixteen years old, is named O Koyo. She is the daughter of one Kihachi, a chief of the Etas. She is a very gentle girl, besides being so exceedingly pretty; and all our people are loud in her praise."

When he heard this, Genzaburô remained lost in thought for a while, and then said to Chokichi, "I want you to do something for me. Are you prepared to serve me in whatever respect I may require you?"

Chokichi answered that he was prepared to do anything in his power to oblige his honour. Upon this, Genzaburô smiled and said, "Well, then, I am willing to employ you in a certain matter; but as there are a great number of passers-by here, I will go and wait for you in a tea-house at Hanakawado; and when you have finished your business here, you can join me, and I will speak to you." With these words Genzaburô left him, and went off to the tea-house.

When Chokichi had finished his work, he changed his clothes, and, hurrying to the tea-house, inquired for Genza-

burô, who was waiting for him upstairs. Chokichi went up to him, and began to thank him for the money which he had bestowed upon him. Genzaburô smiled, and handed him a wine-cup, inviting him to drink, and said—

"I will tell you the service upon which I wish to employ you. I have set my heart upon that girl O Koyo, whom I met to-day upon the Adzuma Bridge, and you must arrange a meeting between us."

When Chokichi heard these words, he was amazed and frightened, and for awhile he made no answer. At last he said—

"Sir, there is nothing that I would not do for you after the favours that I have received from you. If this girl were the daughter of any ordinary man, I would move heaven and earth to comply with your wishes; but for your honour, a handsome and noble Hatamoto, to take for his concubine the daughter of an Eta is a great mistake. By giving a little money you can get the handsomest woman in the town. Pray, sir, abandon the idea."

Upon this Genzaburô was offended, and said—

"This is no matter for you to give advice in. I have told you to get me the girl, and you must obey."

Chokichi, seeing that all that he could say would be of no avail, thought over in his mind how to bring about a meeting between Genzaburô and O Koyo, and replied—

"Sir, I am afraid when I think of the liberty that I have taken. I will go to Kihachi's house, and will use my best endeavours with him that I may bring the girl to you. But for to-day, it is getting late, and night is coming on; so I will go and speak to her father to-morrow."

Genzaburô was delighted to find Chokichi willing to serve him.

"Well," said he, "the day after to-morrow I will await you at the tea-house at Oji, and you can bring O Koyo there. Take this present, small as it is, and do your best for me."

With this he pulled out three riyos from his pocket and handed them to Chokichi, who declined the money with thanks, saying that he had already received too much, and could accept no more; but Genzaburô pressed him, adding, that if the wish of his heart were accomplished he would do still more for him. So Chokichi, in great glee at the good luck which had befallen him, began to revolve all sorts of schemes in his mind; and the two parted.

But O Koyo, who had fallen in love at first sight with Genzaburô on the Adzuma Bridge, went home and could think of nothing but him. Sad and melancholy she sat, and her friend O Kuma tried to comfort her in various ways; but O Koyo yearned, with all her heart, for Genzaburô; and the more she thought over the matter, the better she perceived that she, as the daughter of an Eta, was no match for

a noble Hatamoto. And yet, in spite of this, she pined for him, and bewailed her own vile condition.

Now it happened that her friend O Kuma was in love with Chokichi, and only cared for thinking and speaking of him; one day, when Chokichi went to pay a visit at the house of Kihachi the Eta chief, O Kuma, seeing him come, was highly delighted, and received him very politely; and Chokichi, interrupting her, said—

"O Kuma, I want you to answer me a question: where has O Koyo gone to amuse herself to-day?"

"Oh, you know the gentleman who was talking with you the other day, at the Adzuma Bridge? Well, O Koyo has fallen desperately in love with him, and she says that she is too low-spirited and out of sorts to get up yet."

Chokichi was greatly pleased to hear this, and said to O Kuma—

"How delightful! Why, O Koyo has fallen in love with the very gentleman who is burning with passion for her, and who has employed me to help him in the matter. However, as he is a noble Hatamoto, and his whole family would be ruined if the affair became known to the world, we must endeavour to keep it as secret as possible."

"Dear me!" replied O Kuma; "when O Koyo hears this, how happy she will be, to be sure! I must go and tell her at once."

"Stop!" said Chokichi, detaining her; "if her father, Master Kihachi, is willing, we will tell O Koyo directly. You had better wait here a little until I have consulted him;" and with this he went into an inner chamber to see Kihachi; and, after talking over the news of the day, told him how Genzaburô had fallen passionately in love with O Koyo, and had employed him as a go-between. Then he described how he had received kindness at the hands of Genzaburô when he was in better circumstances, dwelt on the wonderful personal beauty of his lordship, and upon the lucky chance by which he and O Koyo had come to meet each other.

When Kihachi heard this story, he was greatly flattered, and said—

"I am sure I am very much obliged to you. For one of our daughters, whom even the common people despise and shun as a pollution, to be chosen as the concubine of a noble Hatamoto — what could be a greater matter for congratulation!"

So he prepared a feast for Chokichi, and went off at once to tell O Koyo the news. As for the maiden, who had fallen over head and ears in love, there was no difficulty in obtaining her consent to all that was asked of her.

Accordingly Chokichi, having arranged to bring the lovers together on the following day at Oji, was preparing to go and report the glad tidings to Genzaburô; but O Koyo, who

knew that her friend O Kuma was in love with Chokichi, and thought that if she could throw them into one another's arms, they, on their side, would tell no tales about herself and Genzaburô, worked to such good purpose that she gained her point. At last Chokichi, tearing himself from the embraces of O Kuma, returned to Genzaburô, and told him how he had laid his plans so as, without fail, to bring O Koyo to him, the following day, at Oji; and Genzaburô, beside himself with impatience, waited for the morrow.

The next day Genzaburô, having made his preparations, and taking Chokichi with him, went to the tea-house at Oji, and sat drinking wine, waiting for his sweetheart to come.

As for O Koyo, who was half in ecstasies, and half shy at the idea of meeting on this day the man of her heart's desire, she put on her holiday clothes, and went with O Kuma to Oji; and as they went out together, her natural beauty being enhanced by her smart dress, all the people turned round to look at her, and praise her pretty face. And so, after a while, they arrived at Oji, and went into the tea-house that had been agreed upon; and Chokichi, going out to meet them, exclaimed—

"Dear me, Miss O Koyo, his lordship has been all impatience waiting for you: pray make haste and come in."

But, in spite of what he said, O Koyo, on account of her

virgin modesty, would not go in. O Kuma, however, who was not quite so particular, cried out—

"Why, what is the meaning of this? As you've come here, O Koyo, it's a little late for you to be making a fuss about being shy. Don't be a little fool, but come in with me at once." And with these words she caught fast hold of O Koyo's hand, and, pulling her by force into the room, made her sit down by Genzaburô.

When Genzaburô saw how modest she was, he reassured her, saying—

"Come, what is there to be so shy about? Come a little nearer to me, pray."

"Thank you, sir. How could I, who am such a vile thing, pollute your nobility by sitting by your side?" And, as she spoke, the blushes mantled over her face; and the more Genzaburô looked at her, the more beautiful she appeared in his eyes, and the more deeply he became enamoured of her charms. In the meanwhile he called for wine and fish, and all four together made a feast of it. When Chokichi and O Kuma saw how the land lay, they retired discreetly into another chamber, and Genzaburô and O Koyo were left alone together, looking at one another.

"Come," said Genzaburô, smiling, "hadn't you better sit a little closer to me?"

"Thank you, sir; really I'm afraid."

But Genzaburô, laughing at her for her idle fears, said—

"Don't behave as if you hated me."

"Oh, dear! I'm sure I don't hate you, sir. That would be very rude; and, indeed, it's not the case. I loved you when I first saw you at the Adzuma Bridge, and longed for you with all my heart; but I knew what a despised race I belonged to, and that I was no fitting match for you, and so I tried to be resigned. But I am very young and inexperienced, and so I could not help thinking of you, and you alone; and then Chokichi came, and when I heard what you had said about me, I thought, in the joy of my heart, that it must be a dream of happiness."

And as she spoke these words, blushing timidly, Genzaburô was dazzled with her beauty, and said—

"Well, you're a clever child. I'm sure, now, you must have some handsome young lover of your own, and that is why you don't care to come and drink wine and sit by me. Am I not right, eh?"

"Ah, sir, a nobleman like you is sure to have a beautiful wife at home; and then you are so handsome that, of course, all the pretty young ladies are in love with you."

"Nonsense! Why, how clever you are at flattering and paying compliments! A pretty little creature like you was just made to turn all the men's heads—a little witch."

"Ah! those are hard things to say of a poor girl! Who

could think of falling in love with such a wretch as I am? Now, pray tell me all about your own sweetheart: I do so long to hear about her."

"Silly child! I'm not the sort of man to put thoughts into the heads of fair ladies. However, it is quite true that there is some one whom I want to marry."

At this O Koyo began to feel jealous.

"Ah!" said she, "how happy that some one must be! Do, pray, tell me the whole story." And a feeling of jealous spite came over her, and made her quite unhappy.

Genzaburô laughed as he answered—

"Well, that some one is yourself, and nobody else. There!" and as he spoke, he gently tapped the dimple on her cheek with his finger; and O Koyo's heart beat so, for very joy, that, for a little while, she remained speechless. At last she turned her face towards Genzaburô, and said—

"Alas! your lordship is only trifling with me, when you know that what you have just been pleased to propose is the darling wish of my heart. Would that I could only go into your house as a maid-servant, in any capacity, however mean, that I might daily feast my eyes on your handsome face!"

"Ah! I see that you think yourself very clever at hoaxing men, and so you must needs tease me a little;" and, as he spoke, he took her hand, and drew her close up to him, and she, blushing again, cried—

"Oh! pray wait a moment, while I shut the sliding-doors."

"Listen to me, O Koyo! I am not going to forget the promise which I made you just now; nor need you be afraid of my harming you; but take care that you do not deceive me."

"Indeed, sir, the fear is rather that you should set your heart on others; but, although I am no fashionable lady, take pity on me, and love me well and long."

"Of course! I shall never care for another woman but you."

"Pray, pray, never forget those words that you have just spoken."

"And now," replied Genzaburô, "the night is advancing, and, for to-day, we must part; but we will arrange matters, so as to meet again in this tea-house. But, as people would make remarks if we left the tea-house together, I will go out first."

And so, much against their will, they tore themselves from one another, Genzaburô returning to his house, and O Koyo going home, her heart filled with joy at having found the man for whom she had pined; and from that day forth they used constantly to meet in secret at the tea-house; and Genzaburô, in his infatuation, never thought that the matter must surely become notorious after a while, and that he himself

would be banished, and his family ruined: he only took care for the pleasure of the moment.

Now Chokichi, who had brought about the meeting between Genzaburô and his love, used to go every day to the tea-house at Oji, taking with him O Koyo; and Genzaburô neglected all his duties for the pleasure of these secret meetings. Chokichi saw this with great regret, and thought to himself that if Genzaburô gave himself up entirely to pleasure, and laid aside his duties, the secret would certainly be made public, and Genzaburô would bring ruin on himself and his family; so he began to devise some plan by which he might separate them, and plotted as eagerly to estrange them as he had formerly done to introduce them to one another.

At last he hit upon a device which satisfied him. Accordingly one day he went to O Koyo's house, and, meeting her father Kihachi, said to him—

"I've got a sad piece of news to tell you. The family of my lord Genzaburô have been complaining bitterly of his conduct in carrying on his relationship with your daughter, and of the ruin which exposure would bring upon the whole house; so they have been using their influence to persuade him to hear reason, and give up the connection. Now his lordship feels deeply for the damsel, and yet he cannot sacrifice his family for her sake. For the first time, he has become alive to the folly of which he has been guilty, and, full

of remorse, he has commissioned me to devise some stratagem to break off the affair. Of course, this has taken me by surprise; but as there is no gainsaying the right of the case, I have had no option but to promise obedience: this promise I have come to redeem; and now, pray, advise your daughter to think no more of his lordship."

When Kihachi heard this he was surprised and distressed, and told O Koyo immediately; and she, grieving over the sad news, took no thought either of eating or drinking, but remained gloomy and desolate.

In the meanwhile, Chokichi went off to Genzaburô's house, and told him that O Koyo had been taken suddenly ill, and could not go to meet him, and begged him to wait patiently until she should send to tell him of her recovery. Genzaburô, never suspecting the story to be false, waited for thirty days, and still Chokichi brought him no tidings of O Koyo. At last he met Chokichi, and besought him to arrange a meeting for him with O Koyo.

"Sir," replied Chokichi, "she is not yet recovered; so it would be difficult to bring her to see your honour. But I have been thinking much about this affair, sir. If it becomes public, your honour's family will be plunged in ruin. I pray you, sir, to forget all about O Koyo."

"It's all very well for you to give me advice," answered Genzaburô, surprised; "but, having once bound myself to

O Koyo, it would be a pitiful thing to desert her; I therefore implore you once more to arrange that I may meet her."

However, he would not consent upon any account; so Genzaburô returned home, and, from that time forth, daily entreated Chokichi to bring O Koyo to him, and, receiving nothing but advice from him in return, was very sad and lonely.

One day Genzaburô, intent on ridding himself of the grief he felt at his separation from O Koyo, went to the Yoshiwara, and, going into a house of entertainment, ordered a feast to be prepared; but, in the midst of gaiety, his heart yearned all the while for his lost love, and his merriment was but mourning in disguise. At last the night wore on; and as he was retiring along the corridor, he saw a man of about forty years of age, with long hair, coming towards him, who, when he saw Genzaburô, cried out, "Dear me! why this must be my young lord Genzaburô who has come out to enjoy himself."

Genzaburô thought this rather strange; but, looking at the man attentively, recognised him as a retainer whom he had had in his employ the year before, and said—

"This is a curious meeting: pray what have you been about since you left my service? At any rate, I may congratulate you on being well and strong. Where are you living now?"

"Well, sir, since I parted from you I have been earning a living as a fortune-teller at Kanda, and have changed my name to Kaji Sazen. I am living in a poor and humble house; but if your lordship, at your leisure, would honour me with a visit——"

"Well, it's a lucky chance that has brought us together, and I certainly will go and see you; besides, I want you to do something for me. Shall you be at home the day after to-morrow?"

"Certainly, sir, I shall make a point of being at home."

"Very well, then, the day after to-morrow I will go to your house."

"I shall be at your service, sir. And now, as it is getting late, I will take my leave for to-night."

"Good night, then. We shall meet the day after to-morrow." And so the two parted, and went their several ways to rest.

On the appointed day Genzaburô made his preparations, and went in disguise, without any retainers, to call upon Sazen, who met him at the porch of his house, and said, "This is a great honour! My lord Genzaburô is indeed welcome. My house is very mean, but let me invite your lordship to come into an inner chamber."

"Pray," replied Genzaburô, "don't make any ceremony for me. Don't put yourself to any trouble on my account."

And so he passed in, and Sazen called to his wife to prepare

wine and condiments; and they began to feast. At last Genzaburô, looking Sazen in the face, said, "There is a service which I want you to render me—a very secret service; but as, if you were to refuse me, I should be put to shame, before I tell you what that service is, I must know whether you are willing to assist me in anything that I may require of you."

"Yes; if it is anything that is within my power, I am at your disposal."

"Well, then," said Genzaburô, greatly pleased, and drawing ten riyos from his bosom, "this is but a small present to make to you on my first visit, but pray accept it."

"No, indeed! I don't know what your lordship wishes of me; but, at any rate, I cannot receive this money. I really must beg you lordship to take it back again."

But Genzaburô pressed it upon him by force, and at last he was obliged to accept the money. Then Genzaburô told him the whole story of his loves with O Koyo—how he had first met her and fallen in love with her at the Adzuma Bridge; how Chokichi had introduced her to him at the tea-house at Oji, and then when she fell ill, and he wanted to see her again, instead of bringing her to him, had only given him good advice; and so Genzaburô drew a lamentable picture of his state of despair.

Sazen listened patiently to his story, and, after reflecting for a while, replied, "Well, sir, it's not a difficult matter to set

right; and yet it will require some little management. However, if your lordship will do me the honour of coming to see me again the day after to-morrow, I will cast about me in the meanwhile, and will let you know then the result of my deliberations."

When Genzaburô heard this he felt greatly relieved, and, recommending Sazen to do his best in the matter, took his leave and returned home. That very night Sazen, after thinking over all that Genzaburô had told him, laid his plans accordingly, and went off to the house of Kihachi, the Eta chief, and told him the commission with which he had been entrusted.

Kihachi was of course greatly astonished, and said, "Some time ago, sir, Chokichi came here and said that my lord Genzaburô, having been rebuked by his family for his profligate behaviour, had determined to break off his connection with my daughter. Of course I knew that the daughter of an Eta was no fitting match for a nobleman; so when Chokichi came and told me the errand upon which he had been sent, I had no alternative but to announce to my daughter that she must give up all thought of his lordship. Since that time she has been fretting and pining and starving for love. But when I tell her what you have just said, how glad and happy she will be! Let me go and talk to her at once." And with these words, he went to O Koyo's room; and when he

looked upon her thin wasted face, and saw how sad she was, he felt more and more pity for her, and said, "Well, O Koyo, are you in better spirits to-day? Would you like something to eat?"

"Thank you, I have no appetite."

"Well, at any rate, I have some news for you that will make you happy. A messenger has come from my lord Genzaburô, for whom your heart yearns."

At this O Koyo, who had been crouching down like a drooping flower, gave a great start, and cried out, "Is that really true? Pray tell me all about it as quickly as possible."

"The story which Chokichi came and told us, that his lordship wished to break off the connection, was all an invention. He has all along been wishing to meet you, and constantly urged Chokichi to bring you a message from him. It is Chokichi who has been throwing obstacles in the way. At last his lordship has secretly sent a man, called Kaji Sazen, a fortune-teller, to arrange an interview between you. So now, my child, you may cheer up, and go to meet your lover as soon as you please."

When O Koyo heard this, she was so happy that she thought it must all be a dream, and doubted her own senses.

Kihachi in the meanwhile rejoined Sazen in the other room, and, after telling him of the joy with which his daughter had heard the news, put before him wine and other delicacies.

"I think," said Sazen, "that the best way would be for O Koyo to live secretly in my lord Genzaburô's house; but as it will never do for all the world to know of it, it must be managed very quietly; and further, when I get home, I must think out some plan to lull the suspicions of that fellow Chokichi, and let you know my idea by letter. Meanwhile O Koyo had better come home with me to-night: although she is so terribly out of spirits now, she shall meet Genzaburô the day after to-morrow."

Kihachi reported this to O Koyo; and as her pining for Genzaburô was the only cause of her sickness, she recovered her spirits at once, and, saying that she would go with Sazen immediately, joyfully made her preparations. Then Sazen, having once more warned Kihachi to keep the matter secret from Chokichi, and to act upon the letter which he should send him, returned home, taking with him O Koyo; and after O Koyo had bathed and dressed her hair, and painted herself and put on beautiful clothes, she came out looking so lovely that no princess in the land could vie with her; and Sazen, when he saw her, said to himself that it was no wonder that Genzaburô had fallen in love with her; then, as it was getting late, he advised her to go to rest, and, after showing her to her apartments, went to his own room and wrote his letter to Kihachi, containing the scheme which he had devised. When Kihachi received his instructions, he was filled with

admiration at Sazen's ingenuity, and, putting on an appearance of great alarm and agitation, went off immediately to call on Chokichi, and said to him—

"Oh, Master Chokichi, such a terrible thing has happened! Pray, let me tell you all about it."

"Indeed! what can it be?"

"Oh! sir," answered Kihachi, pretending to wipe away his tears, "my daughter O Koyo, mourning over her separation from my lord Genzaburô, at first refused all sustenance, and remained nursing her sorrows until, last night, her woman's heart failing to bear up against her great grief, she drowned herself in the river, leaving behind her a paper on which she had written her intention."

When Chokichi heard this, he was thunderstruck, and exclaimed, "Can this really be true! And when I think that it was I who first introduced her to my lord, I am ashamed to look you in the face."

"Oh, say not so: misfortunes are the punishment due for our misdeeds in a former state of existence. I bear you no ill-will. This money which I hold in my hand was my daughter's; and in her last instructions she wrote to beg that it might be given, after her death, to you, through whose intervention she became allied with a nobleman: so please accept it as my daughter's legacy to you;" and as he spoke, he offered him three riyos.

"You amaze me!" replied the other. "How could I, above all men, who have so much to reproach myself with in my conduct towards you, accept this money?"

"Nay; it was my dead daughter's wish. But since you reproach yourself in the matter when you think of her, I will beg you to put up a prayer and to cause masses to be said for her."

At last, Chokichi, after much persuasion, and greatly to his own distress, was obliged to accept the money; and when Kihachi had carried out all Sazen's instructions, he returned home, laughing in his sleeve.

Chokichi was sorely grieved to hear of O Koyo's death, and remained thinking over the sad news; when all of a sudden looking about him, he saw something like a letter lying on the spot where Kihachi had been sitting, so he picked it up and read it; and, as luck would have it, it was the very letter which contained Sazen's instructions to Kihachi, and in which the whole story which had just affected him so much was made up. When he perceived the trick that had been played upon him, he was very angry, and exclaimed, "To think that I should have been so hoaxed by that hateful old dotard, and such a fellow as Sazen! And Genzaburô, too!—out of gratitude for the favours which I had received from him in old days, I faithfully gave him good advice, and all in vain. Well, they've gulled me once; but I'll be even with them

yet, and hinder their game before it is played out?" And so he worked himself up into a fury, and went off secretly to prowl about Sazen's house to watch for O Koyo, determined to pay off Genzaburô and Sazen for their conduct to him.

In the meanwhile Sazen, who did not for a moment suspect what had happened, when the day which had been fixed upon by him and Genzaburô arrived, made O Koyo put on her best clothes, smartened up his house, and got ready a feast against Genzaburô's arrival. The latter came punctually to his time, and, going in at once, said to the fortune-teller, "Well, have you succeeded in the commission with which I entrusted you?"

At first Sazen pretended to be vexed at the question, and said, "Well, sir, I've done my best; but it's not a matter which can be settled in a hurry. However, there's a young lady of high birth and wonderful beauty upstairs, who has come here secretly to have her fortune told; and if your lordship would like to come with me and see her, you can do so."

But Genzaburô, when he heard that he was not to meet O Koyo, lost heart entirely, and made up his mind to go home again. Sazen, however, pressed him so eagerly, that at last he went upstairs to see this vaunted beauty; and Sazen, drawing aside a screen, showed him O Koyo, who was sitting there. Genzaburô gave a great start, and, turning

to Sazen, said, "Well, you certainly are a first-rate hand at keeping up a hoax. However, I cannot sufficiently praise the way in which you have carried out my instructions."

"Pray, don't mention it, sir. But as it is a long time since you have met the young lady, you must have a great deal to say to one another; so I will go downstairs, and, if you want anything, pray call me." And so he went downstairs and left them.

Then Genzaburô, addressing O Koyo, said, "Ah! it is indeed a long time since we met. How happy it makes me to see you again! Why, your face has grown quite thin. Poor thing! have you been unhappy?" And O Koyo, with the tears starting from her eyes for joy, hid her face; and her heart was so full that she could not speak. But Genzaburô, passing his hand gently over her head and back, and comforting her, said, "Come, sweetheart, there is no need to sob so. Talk to me a little, and let me hear your voice."

At last O Koyo raised her head and said, "Ah! when I was separated from you by the tricks of Chokichi, and thought that I should never meet you again, how tenderly I thought of you! I thought I should have died, and waited for my hour to come, pining all the while for you. And when at last, as I lay between life and death, Sazen came with a message from you, I thought it was all a dream."

And as she spoke, she bent her head and sobbed again; and in Genzaburô's eyes she seemed more beautiful than ever, with her pale, delicate face; and he loved her better than before. Then she said, "If I were to tell you all I have suffered until to-day, I should never stop."

"Yes," replied Genzaburô, "I too have suffered much;" and so they told one another their mutual griefs, and from that day forth they constantly met at Sazen's house.

One day, as they were feasting and enjoying themselves in an upper story in Sazen's house, Chokichi came to the house and said, "I beg pardon; but does one Master Sazen live here?"

"Certainly, sir: I am Sazen, at your service. Pray where are you from?"

"Well, sir, I have a little business to transact with you. May I make so bold as to go in?" And with these words, he entered the house.

"But who and what are you?" said Sazen.

"Sir, I am an Eta; and my name is Chokichi. I beg to bespeak your goodwill for myself: I hope we may be friends."

Sazen was not a little taken aback at this; however, he put on an innocent face, as though he had never heard of Chokichi before, and said, "I never heard of such a thing! Why, I thought you were some respectable person; and you have the impudence to tell me that your name is Chokichi,

and that you're one of those accursed Etas. To think of such a shameless villain coming and asking to be friends with me, forsooth! Get you gone!—the quicker, the better: your presence pollutes the house."

Chokichi smiled contemptuously, as he answered, "So you deem the presence of an Eta in your house a pollution—eh? Why, I thought you must be one of us."

"Insolent knave! Begone as fast as possible."

"Well, since you say that I defile your house, you had better get rid of O Koyo as well. I suppose she must equally be a pollution to it."

This put Sazen rather in a dilemma; however, he made up his mind not to show any hesitation, and said, "What are you talking about? There is no O Koyo here; and I never saw such a person in my life."

Chokichi quietly drew out of the bosom of his dress the letter from Sazen to Kihachi, which he had picked up a few days before, and, showing it to Sazen, replied, "If you wish to dispute the genuineness of this paper, I will report the whole matter to the Governor of Yedo; and Genzaburô's family will be ruined, and the rest of you who are parties in this affair will come in for your share of trouble. Just wait a little."

And as he pretended to leave the house, Sazen, at his wits' end, cried out, "Stop! stop! I want to speak to you. Pray,

stop and listen quietly. It is quite true, as you said, that O Koyo is in my house; and really your indignation is perfectly just. Come! let us talk over matters a little. Now you yourself were originally a respectable man; and although you have fallen in life, there is no reason why your disgrace should last for ever. All that you want in order to enable you to escape out of this fraternity of Etas is a little money. Why should you not get this from Genzaburô, who is very anxious to keep his intrigue with O Koyo secret?"

Chokichi laughed disdainfully. "I am ready to talk with you; but I don't want any money. All I want is to report the affair to the authorities, in order that I may be revenged for the fraud that was put upon me."

"Wont you accept twenty-five riyos?"

"Twenty-five riyos! No, indeed! I will not take a fraction less than a hundred; and if I cannot get them I will report the whole matter at once."

Sazen, after a moment's consideration, hit upon a scheme, and answered, smiling, "Well, Master Chokichi, you're a fine fellow, and I admire your spirit. You shall have the hundred riyos you ask for; but, as I have not so much money by me at present, I will go to Genzaburô's house and fetch it. It's getting dark now, but it's not very late; so I'll trouble you to come with me, and then I can give you the money to-night."

Chokichi consenting to this, the pair left the house together.

Now Sazen, who as a Rônin wore a long dirk in his girdle, kept looking out for a moment when Chokichi should be off his guard, in order to kill him; but Chokichi kept his eyes open, and did not give Sazen a chance. At last Chokichi, as ill-luck would have it, stumbled against a stone and fell; and Sazen, profiting by the chance, drew his dirk and stabbed him in the side; and as Chokichi, taken by surprise, tried to get up, he cut him severely over the head, until at last he fell dead. Sazen then looking around him, and seeing, to his great delight, that there was no one near, returned home. The following day, Chokichi's body was found by the police; and when they examined it, they found nothing upon it save a paper, which they read, and which proved to be the very letter which Sazen had sent to Kihachi, and which Chokichi had picked up. The matter was immediately reported to the governor, and, Sazen having been summoned, an investigation was held. Sazen, cunning and bold murderer as he was, lost his self-possession when he saw what a fool he had been not to get back from Chokichi the letter which he had written, and, when he was put to a rigid examination under torture, confessed that he had hidden O Koyo at Genzaburô's instigation, and then killed Chokichi, who had found out the secret. Upon this the governor, after consulting about Genzaburô's case, decided that, as he had disgraced his position as a Hatamoto by contracting an alliance with the

daughter of an Eta, his property should be confiscated, his family blotted out, and himself banished. As for Kihachi, the Eta chief, and his daughter O Koyo, they were handed over for punishment to the chief of the Etas, and by him they too were banished; while Sazen, against whom the murder of Chokichi had been fully proved, was executed according to law.

NOTE.

At Asakusa, in Yedo, there lives a man called Danzayémon, the chief of the Etas. This man traces his pedigree back to Minamoto no Yoritomo, who founded the Shogunate in the year 1192 A.D. The whole of the Etas in Japan are under his jurisdiction: his subordinates are called Koyagashira, or "chiefs of the huts;" and he and they constitute the government of the Etas. In the "Legacy of Iyéyasu," already quoted, the 36th Law provides as follows:—"All wandering mendicants, such as male sorcerers, female diviners, hermits, blind people, beggars, and tanners (Etas), have had from of old their respective rulers. Be not disinclined, however, to punish any such who give rise to disputes, or who overstep the boundaries of their own classes and are disobedient to existing laws."

The occupation of the Etas is to kill and flay horses, oxen, and other beasts, to stretch drums and make shoes; and if they are very poor, they wander from house to house, working as cobblers, mending old shoes and leather, and so earn a scanty livelihood. Besides this, their daughters and young married women gain a trifle as wandering minstrels, called Torioi, playing on the *shami-*

sen, a sort of banjo, and singing ballads. They never marry out of their own fraternity, but remain apart, a despised and shunned race.

At executions by crucifixion it is the duty of the Etas to transfix the victims with spears; and, besides this, they have to perform all sorts of degrading offices about criminals, such as carrying sick prisoners from their cells to the hall of justice, and burying the bodies of those that have been executed. Thus their race is polluted and accursed, and they are hated accordingly.

Now this is how the Etas come to be under the jurisdiction of Danzayémon:—

When Minamoto no Yoritomo was yet a child, his father, Minamoto no Yoshitomo, fought with Taira no Kiyomori, and was killed by treachery: so his family was ruined; and Yoshitomo's concubine, whose name was Tokiwa, took her children and fled from the house, to save her own and their lives. But Kiyomori, desiring to destroy the family of Yoshitomo root and branch, ordered his retainers to divide themselves into bands, and seek out the children. At last they were found; but Tokiwa was so exceedingly beautiful that Kiyomori was inflamed with love for her, and desired her to become his own concubine. Then Tokiwa told Kiyomori that if he would spare her little ones she would share his couch; but that if he killed her children she would destroy herself rather than yield to his desire. When he heard this, Kiyomori, bewildered by the beauty of Tokiwa, spared the lives of her children, but banished them from the capital.

So Yoritomo was sent to Hirugakojima, in the province of Idzu; and when he grew up and became a man, he married the daughter of a peasant. After a while Yoritomo left the province, and went

to the wars, leaving his wife pregnant; and in due time she was delivered of a male child, to the delight of her parents, who rejoiced that their daughter should bear seed to a nobleman; but she soon fell sick and died, and the old people took charge of the babe. And when they also died, the care of the child fell to his mother's kinsmen, and he grew up to be a peasant.

Now Kiyomori, the enemy of Yoritomo, had been gathered to his fathers; and Yoritomo had avenged the death of his father by slaying Munémori, the son of Kiyomori; and there was peace throughout the land. And Yoritomo became the chief of all the noble houses in Japan, and first established the government of the country. When Yoritomo had thus raised himself to power, if the son that his peasant wife had born to him had proclaimed himself the son of the mighty prince, he would have been made lord over a province; but he took no thought of this, and remained a tiller of the earth, forfeiting a glorious inheritance; and his descendants after him lived as peasants in the same village, increasing in prosperity and in good repute among their neighbours.

But the princely line of Yoritomo came to an end in three generations, and the house of Hôjô was all-powerful in the land.

Now it happened that the head of the house of Hôjô heard that a descendant of Yoritomo was living as a peasant in the land, so he summoned him and said—

"It is a hard thing to see the son of an illustrious house live and die a peasant. I will promote you to the rank of Samurai."

Then the peasant answered, "My lord, if I become a Samurai, and the retainer of some noble, I shall not be so happy as when I was my own master. If I may not remain a husbandman, let me be a chief over men, however humble they may be."

But my lord Hôjô was angry at this, and, thinking to punish the peasant for his insolence, said—

"Since you wish to become a chief over men, no matter how humble, there is no means of gratifying your strange wish but by making you chief over the Etas of the whole country. So now see that you rule them well."

When he heard this, the peasant was afraid; but because he had said that he wished to become a chief over men, however humble, he could not choose but become chief of the Etas, he and his children after him for ever; and Danzayémon, who rules the Etas at the present time, and lives at Asakusa, is his lineal descendant.

FAIRY TALES.

FAIRY TALES.

I THINK that their quaintness is a sufficient apology for the following little children's stories. With the exception of that of the "Elves and the Envious Neighbour," which comes out of a curious book on etymology and proverbial lore, called the Kotowazagusa, these stories are found printed in little separate pamphlets, with illustrations, the stereotype blocks of which have become so worn that the print is hardly legible. These are the first tales which are put into a Japanese child's hands; and it is with these, and such as these, that the Japanese mother hushes her little ones to sleep. Knowing the interest which many children of a larger growth take in such Baby Stories, I was anxious to have collected more of them. I was disappointed, however, for those which I give here are the only ones which I could find in print; and if I asked the Japanese to tell me others, they only thought I was laughing at them, and changed the subject. The stories of the Tongue-cut Sparrow, and the Old Couple and their Dog, have been paraphrased in other works upon Japan; but I am not aware of their having been literally translated before.

THE TONGUE-CUT SPARROW.

ONCE upon a time there lived an old man and an old woman. The old man, who had a kind heart, kept a young sparrow, which he tenderly nurtured. But the dame was a cross-grained old thing; and one day, when the sparrow had pecked at some paste with which she was going to starch her linen, she flew into a great rage, and cut the sparrow's tongue and let it loose. When the old man came home from the hills and found that the bird had flown, he asked what had become of it; so the old woman answered that she had cut its tongue and let it go, because it had stolen her starching-paste. Now the old man, hearing this cruel tale, was sorely grieved, and thought to himself, "Alas! where can my bird be gone? Poor thing! Poor little tongue-cut sparrow! where is your home now?" and he wandered far and wide, seeking for his pet, and crying, "Mr. Sparrow! Mr. Sparrow! where are you living?"

One day, at the foot of a certain mountain, the old man fell in with the lost bird; and when they had congratulated

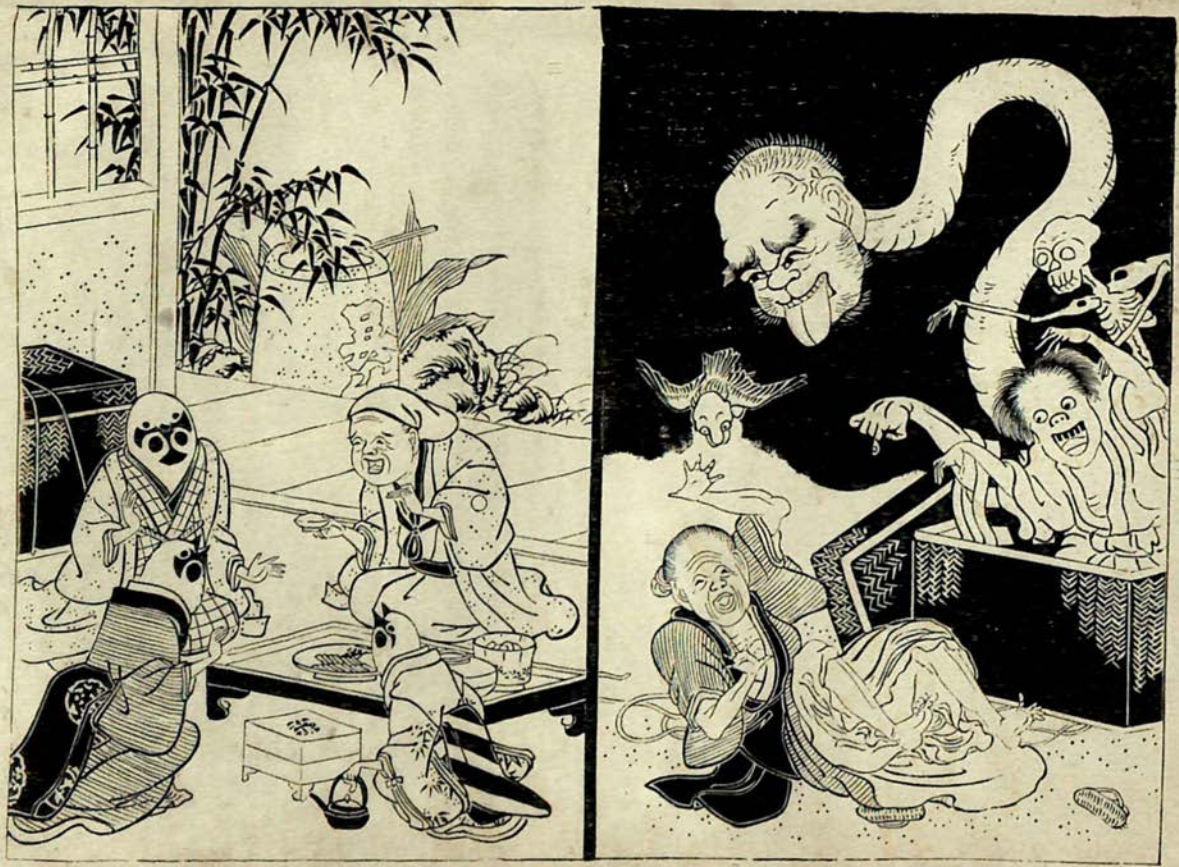
one another on their mutual safety, the sparrow led the old man to his home, and, having introduced him to his wife and chicks, set before him all sorts of dainties, and entertained him hospitably.

"Please partake of our humble fare," said the sparrow: "poor as it is, you are very welcome."

"What a polite sparrow!" answered the old man, who remained for a long time as the sparrow's guest, and was daily feasted right royally. At last the old man said that he must take his leave and return home; and the bird, offering him two wicker baskets, begged him to carry them with him as a parting present. One of the baskets was heavy, and the other was light; so the old man, saying that as he was feeble and stricken in years he would only accept the light one, shouldered it, and trudged off home, leaving the sparrow-family disconsolate at parting from him.

When the old man got home, the dame grew very angry, and began to scold him, saying, "Well, and pray where have you been this many a day? A pretty thing, indeed, to be gadding about at your time of life!"

"Oh!" replied he, "I have been on a visit to the sparrows; and when I came away, they gave me this wicker basket as a parting gift." Then they opened the basket to see what was inside, and, lo and behold! it was full of gold and silver and precious things. When the old woman, who was as greedy



THE TONGUE-CUT SPARROW.

as she was cross, saw all the riches displayed before her, she changed her scolding strain, and could not contain herself for joy.

"I'll go and call upon the sparrows, too," said she, "and get a pretty present." So she asked the old man the way to the sparrows' house, and set forth on her journey. Following his directions, she at last met the tongue-cut sparrow, and exclaimed—

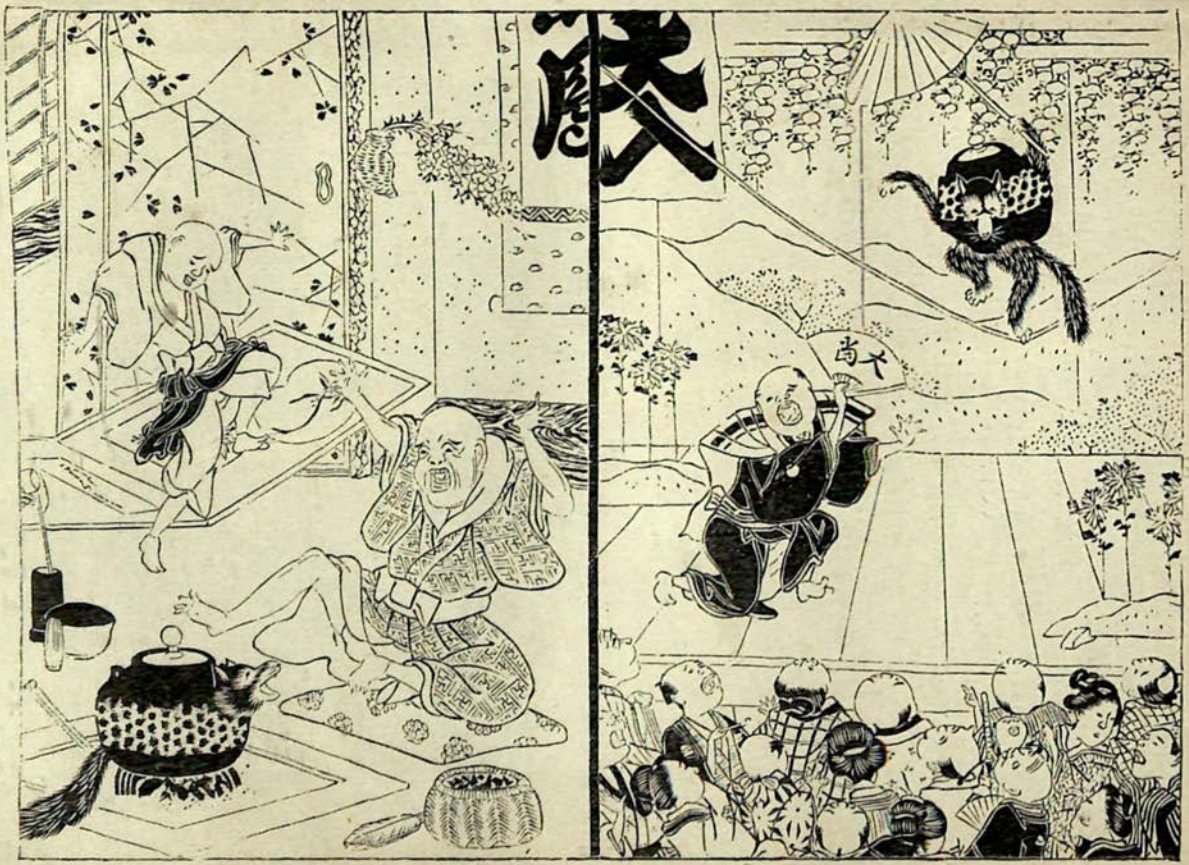
"Well met! well met! Mr. Sparrow. I have been looking forward to the pleasure of seeing you." So she tried to flatter and cajole the sparrow by soft speeches.

The bird could not but invite the dame to its home; but it took no pains to feast her, and said nothing about a parting gift. She, however, was not to be put off; so she asked for something to carry away with her in remembrance of her visit. The sparrow accordingly produced two baskets, as before, and the greedy old woman, choosing the heavier of the two, carried it off with her. But when she opened the basket to see what was inside, all sorts of hobgoblins and elves sprang out of it, and began to torment her.

But the old man adopted a son, and his family grew rich and prosperous. What a happy old man!

THE ACCOMPLISHED AND LUCKY TEA-KETTLE.

A LONG time ago, at a temple called Morinji, in the province of Jôshiu, there was an old tea-kettle. One day, when the priest of the temple was about to hang it over the hearth to boil the water for his tea, to his amazement, the kettle all of a sudden put forth the head and tail of a badger. What a wonderful kettle, to come out all over fur! The priest, thunderstruck, called in the novices of the temple to see the sight; and whilst they were stupidly staring, one suggesting one thing and another another, the kettle, jumping up into the air, began flying about the room. More astonished than ever, the priest and his pupils tried to pursue it; but no thief or cat was ever half so sharp as this wonderful badger-kettle. At last, however, they managed to knock it down and secure it; and, holding it in with their united efforts, they forced it into a box, intending to carry it off and throw it away in some distant place, so that they might be no more plagued by the goblin. For this day their troubles were over; but, as luck would have it, the tinker who was in the



THE ACCOMPLISHED AND LUCKY TEAKETTLE.

habit of working for the temple called in, and the priest suddenly bethought him that it was a pity to throw the kettle away for nothing, and that he might as well get a trifle for it, no matter how small. So he brought out the kettle, which had resumed its former shape and had got rid of its head and tail, and showed it to the tinker. When the tinker saw the kettle, he offered twenty copper coins for it, and the priest was only too glad to close the bargain and be rid of his troublesome piece of furniture. But the tinker trudged off home with his pack and his new purchase. That night, as he lay asleep, he heard a strange noise near his pillow; so he peeped out from under the bedclothes, and there he saw the kettle that he had bought in the temple covered with fur, and walking about on four legs. The tinker started up in a fright to see what it could all mean, when all of a sudden the kettle resumed its former shape. This happened over and over again, until at last the tinker showed the tea-kettle to a friend of his, who said, "This is certainly an accomplished and lucky tea-kettle. You should take it about as a show, with songs and accompaniments of musical instruments, and make it dance and walk on the tight rope."

The tinker, thinking this good advice, made arrangements with a showman, and set up an exhibition. The noise of the kettle's performances soon spread abroad, until even the princes

of the land sent to order the tinker to come to them; and he grew rich beyond all his expectations. Even the princesses, too, and the great ladies of the court, took great delight in the dancing kettle, so that no sooner had it shown its tricks in one place than it was time for them to keep some other engagement. At last the tinker grew so rich that he took the kettle back to the temple, where it was laid up as a precious treasure, and worshipped as a saint.

THE HARE AND THE BADGER.

THE CRACKLING MOUNTAIN.

ONCE upon a time there lived an old man and an old woman, who kept a pet white hare, by which they set great store. One day, a badger, that lived hard by, came and ate up the food which had been put out for the hare; so the old man, flying into a great rage, seized the badger, and, tying the beast up to a tree, went off to the mountain to cut wood, while the old woman stopped at home and ground the wheat for the evening porridge. Then the badger, with tears in his eyes, said to the old woman—

"Please, dame, please untie this rope!"

The dame, thinking that it was a cruel thing to see a poor beast in pain, undid the rope; but the ungrateful brute was no sooner loose, than he cried out—

"I'll be revenged for this," and was off in a trice.

When the hare heard this, he went off to the mountain to warn the old man; and whilst the hare was away on this errand, the badger came back, and killed the dame. Then the beast, having assumed the old woman's form, made her dead body into broth, and waited for the old man to come home

from the mountain. When he returned, tired and hungry, the pretended old woman said—

"Come, come; I've made such a nice broth of the badger you hung up. Sit down, and make a good supper of it."

With these words she set out the broth, and the old man made a hearty meal, licking his lips over it, and praising the savoury mess. But as soon as he had finished eating, the badger, reassuming its natural shape, cried out—

"Nasty old man! you've eaten your own wife. Look at her bones, lying in the kitchen sink!" and, laughing contemptuously, the badger ran away, and disappeared.

Then the old man, horrified at what he had done, set up a great lamentation; and whilst he was bewailing his fate, the hare came home, and, seeing how matters stood, determined to avenge the death of his mistress. So he went back to the mountain, and, falling in with the badger, who was carrying a faggot of sticks on his back, he struck a light and set fire to the sticks, without letting the badger see him. When the badger heard the crackling noise of the faggot burning on his back, he called out—

"Holloa! what is that noise?"

"Oh!" answered the hare, "this is called the Crackling Mountain. There's always this noise here."

And as the fire gathered strength, and went pop! pop! pop! the badger said again—

"Oh dear! what can this noise be?"

"This is called the 'Pop! Pop! Mountain,'" answered the hare.

All at once the fire began to singe the badger's back, so that he fled, howling with pain, and jumped into a river hard by. But, although the water put out the fire, his back was burnt as black as a cinder. The hare, seeing an opportunity for torturing the badger to his heart's content, made a poultice of cayenne pepper, which he carried to the badger's house, and, pretending to condole with him, and to have a sovereign remedy for burns, he applied his hot plaister to his enemy's sore back. Oh! how it smarted and pained! and how the badger yelled and cried!

When, at last, the badger got well again, he went to the hare's house, thinking to reproach him for having caused him so much pain. When he got there, he found that the hare had built himself a boat.

"What have you built that boat for, Mr. Hare?" said the badger.

"I'm going to the capital of the moon,"[1] answered the hare; "won't you come with me?"

"I had enough of your company on the Crackling Mountain, where you played me such tricks. I'd rather make a

[1] The mountains in the moon are supposed to resemble a hare in shape. Hence there is a fanciful connection between the hare and the moon.

boat for myself," replied the badger, who immediately began building himself a boat of clay.

The hare, seeing this, laughed in his sleeve; and so the two launched their boats upon the river. The waves came plashing against the two boats; but the hare's boat was built of wood, while that of the badger was made of clay, and, as they rowed down the river, the clay boat began to crumble away; then the hare, seizing his paddle, and brandishing it in the air, struck savagely at the badger's boat, until he had smashed it to pieces, and killed his enemy.

When the old man heard that his wife's death had been avenged, he was glad in his heart, and more than ever petted and loved the hare, whose brave deeds had caused him to welcome the returning spring.

THE STORY OF THE OLD MAN WHO MADE WITHERED TREES TO BLOSSOM.

In the old, old days, there lived an honest man with his wife, who had a favourite dog, which they used to feed with fish and titbits from their own kitchen. One day, as the old folks went out to work in their garden, the dog went with them, and began playing about. All of a sudden, the dog stopped short, and began to bark, "Bow, wow, wow!" wagging his tail violently. The old people thought that there must be something nice to eat under the ground, so they brought a spade and began digging, when, lo and behold! the place was full of gold pieces and silver, and all sorts of precious things, which had been buried there. So they gathered the treasure together, and, after giving alms to the poor, bought themselves rice-fields and corn-fields, and became wealthy people.

Now, in the next house there dwelt a covetous and stingy old man and woman, who, when they heard what had hap-

pened, came and borrowed the dog, and, having taken him home, prepared a great feast for him, and said—

"If you please, Mr. Dog, we should be much obliged to you if you would show us a place with plenty of money in it."

The dog, however, who up to that time had received nothing but cuffs and kicks from his hosts, would not eat any of the dainties which they set before him; so the old people began to get cross, and, putting a rope round the dog's neck, led him out into the garden. But it was all in vain; let them lead him where they might, not a sound would the dog utter: he had no "bow-wow" for them. At last, however, the dog stopped at a certain spot, and began to sniff; so, thinking that this must surely be the lucky place, they dug, and found nothing but a quantity of dirt and nasty offal, over which they had to hold their noses. Furious at being disappointed, the wicked old couple seized the dog, and killed him.

When the good old man saw that the dog, whom he had lent, did not come home, he went next door to ask what had become of him; and the wicked old man answered that he had killed the dog, and buried him at the root of a pine-tree; so the good old fellow, with a heavy heart, went to the spot, and, having set out a tray with delicate food, burnt incense, and adorned the grave with flowers, as he shed tears over his lost pet.

THE OLD MAN WHO CAUSED WITHERED TREES TO FLOWER.

But there was more good luck in store yet for the old people—the reward of their honesty and virtue. How do you think that happened, my children? It is very wrong to be cruel to dogs and cats.

That night, when the good old man was fast asleep in bed, the dog appeared to him, and, after thanking him for all his kindness, said—

"Cause the pine-tree, under which I am buried, to be cut down and made into a mortar, and use it, thinking of it as if it were myself."

The old man did as the dog had told him to do, and made a mortar out of the wood of the pine-tree; but when he ground his rice in it, each grain of rice was turned into some rich treasure. When the wicked old couple saw this, they came to borrow the mortar; but no sooner did they try to use it, than all their rice was turned into filth; so, in a fit of rage, they broke up the mortar and burnt it. But the good old man, little suspecting that his precious mortar had been broken and burnt, wondered why his neighbours did not bring it back to him.

One night the dog appeared to him again in a dream, and told him what had happened, adding that if he would take the ashes of the burnt mortar and sprinkle them on withered trees, the trees would revive, and suddenly put out flowers. After saying this the dream vanished, and the old

man, who heard for the first time of the loss of his mortar, ran off weeping to the neighbours' house, and begged them, at any rate, to give him back the ashes of his treasure. Having obtained these, he returned home, and made a trial of their virtues upon a withered cherry-tree, which, upon being touched by the ashes, immediately began to sprout and blossom. When he saw this wonderful effect, he put the ashes into a basket, and went about the country, announcing himself as an old man who had the power of bringing dead trees to life again.

A certain prince, hearing of this, and thinking it a mighty strange thing, sent for the old fellow, who showed his power by causing all the withered plum and cherry trees to shoot out and put forth flowers. So the prince gave him a rich reward of pieces of silk and cloth and other presents, and sent him home rejoicing.

So soon as the neighbours heard of this they collected all the ashes that remained, and, having put them in a basket, the wicked old man went out into the castle town, and gave out that he was the old man who had the power of reviving dead trees, and causing them to flower. He had not to wait long before he was called into the prince's palace, and ordered to exhibit his power. But when he climbed up into a withered tree, and began to scatter the ashes, not a bud nor a flower appeared; but the ashes all flew into the prince's eyes

and mouth, blinding and choking him. When the prince's retainers saw this, they seized the old man, and beat him almost to death, so that he crawled off home in a very sorry plight. When he and his wife found out what a trap they had fallen into, they stormed and scolded, and put themselves into a passion; but that did no good at all.

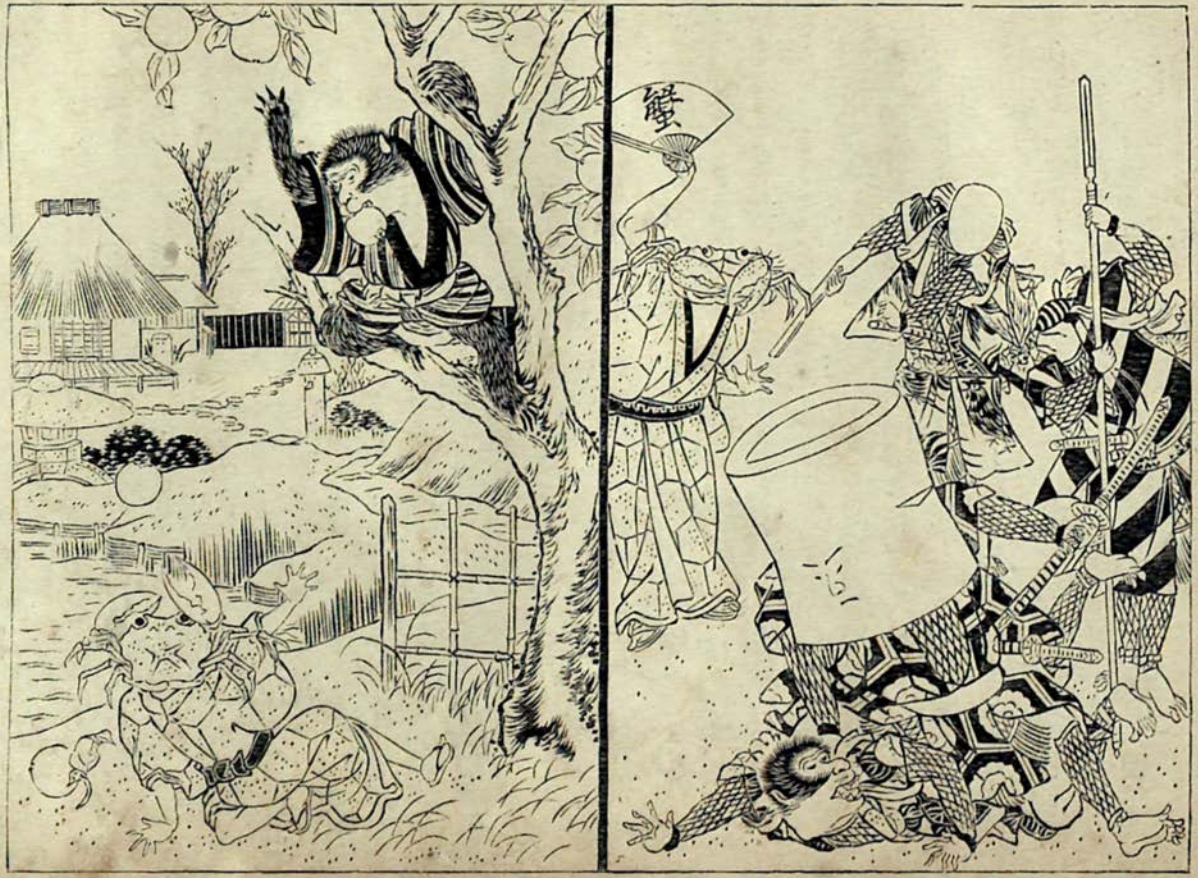
The good old man and woman, so soon as they heard of their neighbours' distress, sent for them, and, after reproving them for their greed and cruelty, gave them a share of their own riches, which, by repeated strokes of luck, had now increased to a goodly sum. So the wicked old people mended their ways, and led good and virtuous lives ever after.

THE BATTLE OF THE APE AND THE CRAB.

If a man thinks only of his own profit, and tries to benefit himself at the expense of others, he will incur the hatred of Heaven. Men should lay up in their hearts the story of the Battle of the Ape and Crab, and teach it, as a profitable lesson, to their children.

Once upon a time there was a crab who lived in a marsh in a certain part of the country. It fell out one day that, the crab having picked up a rice cake, an ape, who had got a nasty hard persimmon-seed, came up, and begged the crab to make an exchange with him. The crab, who was a simple-minded creature, agreed to this proposal; and they each went their way, the ape chuckling to himself at the good bargain which he had made.

When the crab got home, he planted the persimmon-seed in his garden, and, as time slipped by, it sprouted, and by degrees grew to be a big tree. The crab watched the growth of his tree with great delight; but when the fruit ripened, and he was going to pluck it, the ape came in, and offered to



THE APE AND THE CRAB.

gather it for him. The crab consenting, the ape climbed up into the tree, and began eating all the ripe fruit himself, while he only threw down the sour persimmons to the crab, inviting him, at the same time, to eat heartily. The crab, however, was not pleased at this arrangement, and thought that it was his turn to play a trick upon the ape; so he called out to him to come down head foremost. The ape did as he was bid; and as he crawled down, head foremost, the ripe fruit all came tumbling out of his pockets, and the crab, having picked up the persimmons, ran off and hid himself in a hole. The ape, seeing this, lay in ambush, and as soon as the crab crept out of his hiding-place gave him a sound drubbing, and went home. Just at this time a friendly egg and a bee, who were the apprentices of a certain rice-mortar, happened to pass that way, and, seeing the crab's piteous condition, tied up his wounds, and, having escorted him home, began to lay plans to be revenged upon the cruel ape.

Having agreed upon a scheme, they all went to the ape's house, in his absence; and each one having undertaken to play a certain part, they waited in secret for their enemy to come home. The ape, little dreaming of the mischief that was brewing, returned home, and, having a fancy to drink a cup of tea, began lighting the fire in the hearth, when, all of a sudden, the egg, which was hidden in the ashes, burst with the heat, and bespattered the frightened ape's face, so that he fled,

howling with pain, and crying, "Oh! what an unlucky beast I am!" Maddened with the heat of the burst egg, he tried to go to the back of the house, when the bee darted out of a cupboard, and a piece of seaweed, who had joined the party, coming up at the same time, the ape was surrounded by enemies. In despair, he seized the clothes-rack, and fought valiantly for awhile; but he was no match for so many, and was obliged to run away, with the others in hot pursuit after him. Just as he was making his escape by a back door, however, the piece of seaweed tripped him up, and the rice-mortar, closing with him from behind, made an end of him.

So the crab, having punished his enemy, went home in triumph, and lived ever after on terms of brotherly love with the seaweed and the mortar. Was there ever such a fine piece of fun!

LITTLE PEACHLING.

THE ADVENTURES OF LITTLE PEACHLING.

MANY hundred years ago there lived an honest old wood-cutter and his wife. One fine morning the old man went off to the hills with his billhook, to gather a faggot of sticks, while his wife went down to the river to wash the dirty clothes. When she came to the river, she saw a peach floating down the stream; so she picked it up, and carried it home with her, thinking to give it to her husband to eat when he should come in. The old man soon came down from the hills, and the good wife set the peach before him, when, just as she was inviting him to eat it, the fruit split in two, and a little puling baby was born into the world. So the old couple took the babe, and brought it up as their own; and, because it had been born in a peach, they called it *Momotarô*,[1] or Little Peachling.

By degrees Little Peachling grew up to be strong and brave, and at last one day he said to his old foster-parents—

[1] *Momo* means a peach, and *Tarô* is the termination of the names of eldest sons, as *Hikotarô*, *Tokutarô*, &c. In modern times, however, the termination has been applied indifferently to any male child.

"I am going to the ogres' island to carry off the riches that they have stored up there. Pray, then, make me some millet dumplings for my journey."

So the old folks ground the millet, and made the dumplings for him; and Little Peachling, after taking an affectionate leave of them, cheerfully set out on his travels.

As he was journeying on, he fell in with an ape, who gibbered at him, and said, "Kia! kia! kia! where are you off to, Little Peachling?"

"I'm going to the ogres' island, to carry off their treasure," answered Little Peachling.

"What are you carrying at your girdle?"

"I'm carrying the very best millet dumplings in all Japan."

"If you'll give me one, I will go with you," said the ape.

So Little Peachling gave one of his dumplings to the ape, who received it and followed him. When he had gone a little further, he heard a pheasant calling—

"Ken! ken! ken![1] where are you off to, Master Peachling?"

Little Peachling answered as before; and the pheasant, having begged and obtained a millet dumpling, entered his service, and followed him. A little while after this, they met a dog, who cried—

[1] The country folk in Japan pretend that the pheasant's call is a sign of an approaching earthquake.

"Bow! wow! wow! whither away, Master Peachling?"

"I'm going off to the ogres' island, to carry off their treasure."

"If you will give me one of those nice millet dumplings of yours, I will go with you," said the dog.

"With all my heart," said Little Peachling. So he went on his way, with the ape, the pheasant, and the dog following after him.

When they got to the ogres' island, the pheasant flew over the castle gate, and the ape clambered over the castle wall, while Little Peachling, leading the dog, forced in the gate, and got into the castle. Then they did battle with the ogres, and put them to flight, and took their king prisoner. So all the ogres did homage to Little Peachling, and brought out the treasures which they had laid up. There were caps and coats that made their wearers invisible, jewels which governed the ebb and flow of the tide, coral, musk, emeralds, amber, and tortoiseshell, besides gold and silver. All these were laid before Little Peachling by the conquered ogres.

So Little Peachling went home laden with riches, and maintained his foster-parents in peace and plenty for the remainder of their lives.

THE FOXES' WEDDING.

ONCE upon a time there was a young white fox, whose name was Fukuyémon. When he had reached the fitting age, he shaved off his forelock[1] and began to think of taking to himself a beautiful bride. The old fox, his father, resolved to give up his inheritance to his son,[2] and retired into private life; so the young fox, in gratitude for this, laboured hard and earnestly to increase his patrimony. Now it happened that in a famous old family of foxes there was a beautiful young lady-fox, with such lovely fur that the fame of her jewel-like charms was spread far and wide. The young white fox, who had heard of this, was bent on making her his wife, and a meeting was arranged between them. There was not a fault to be found on either side; so the preliminaries were settled, and the wedding presents sent from the bridegroom to the bride's house, with congratulatory speeches

[1] See the Appendix on "Ceremonies."

[2] See the note on the word Inkiyo, in the story of the "Prince and the Badger."

THE FOXES' WEDDING.

from the messenger, which were duly acknowledged by the person deputed to receive the gifts; the bearers, of course, received the customary fee in copper cash.

When the ceremonies had been concluded, an auspicious day was chosen for the bride to go to her husband's house, and she was carried off in solemn procession during a shower of rain, the sun shining all the while.[1] After the ceremonies of drinking wine had been gone through, the bride changed her dress, and the wedding was concluded, without let or hindrance, amid singing and dancing and merry-making.

The bride and bridegroom lived lovingly together, and a litter of little foxes were born to them, to the great joy of the old grandsire, who treated the little cubs as tenderly as if they had been butterflies or flowers. "They're the very image of their old grandfather," said he, as proud as possible. "As for medicine, bless them, they're so healthy that they'll never need a copper coin's worth!"

As soon as they were old enough, they were carried off to the temple of Inari Sama, the patron saint of foxes, and the old grandparents prayed that they might be delivered from dogs and all the other ills to which fox flesh is heir.

[1] A shower during sunshine, which we call "the devil beating his wife," is called in Japan "the fox's bride going to her husband's house."

In this way the white fox by degrees waxed old and prosperous, and his children, year by year, became more and more numerous around him; so that, happy in his family and his business, every recurring spring brought him fresh cause for joy.

THE HISTORY OF SAKATA KINTOKI.

A LONG time ago there was an officer of the Emperor's body-guard, called Sakata Kurando, a young man who, although he excelled in valour and in the arts of war, was of a gentle and loving disposition. This young officer was deeply enamoured of a fair young lady, called Yaégiri, who lived at Gojôzaka, at Kiyôto. Now it came to pass that, having incurred the jealousy of certain other persons, Kurando fell into disgrace with the Court, and became a Rônin, so he was no longer able to keep up any communication with his love Yaégiri; indeed, he became so poor that it was a hard matter for him to live. So he left the place and fled, no one knew whither. As for Yaégiri, lovesick and lorn, and pining for her lost darling, she escaped from the house where she lived, and wandered hither and thither through the country, seeking everywhere for Kurando.

Now Kurando, when he left the palace, turned tobacco merchant, and, as he was travelling about hawking his goods, it chanced that he fell in with Yaégiri; so, having communi-

cated to her his last wishes, he took leave of her and put an end to his life.

Poor Yaégiri, having buried her lover, went to the Ashigara Mountain, a distant and lonely spot, where she gave birth to a little boy, who, as soon as he was born, was of such wonderful strength that he walked about and ran playing all over the mountain. A woodcutter, who chanced to see the marvel, was greatly frightened at first, and thought the thing altogether uncanny; but after a while he got used to the child, and became quite fond of him, and called him "Little Wonder," and gave his mother the name of the "Old Woman of the Mountain."

One day, as "Little Wonder" was playing about, he saw that on the top of a high cedar-tree there was a tengu's nest;[1] so he began shaking the tree with all his might, until at last the tengu's nest came tumbling down.

As luck would have it, the famous hero, Minamoto no Yorimitsu, with his retainers, Watanabé Isuna, Usui Sadamitsu, and several others, had come to the mountain to hunt, and seeing the feat which "Little Wonder" had performed, came to the conclusion that he could be no ordinary child. Minamoto no Yorimitsu ordered Watanabé Isuna to find out the child's name and parentage. The Old Woman of the

[1] *Tengu*, or the Heavenly Dog, a hobgoblin who infests desert places, and is invoked to frighten naughty little children.

Mountain, on being asked about him, answered that she was the wife of Kurando, and that "Little Wonder" was the child of their marriage. And she proceeded to relate all the adventures which had befallen her.

When Yorimitsu heard her story, he said, "Certainly this child does not belie his lineage. Give the brat to me, and I will make him my retainer." The Old Woman of the Mountain gladly consented, and gave "Little Wonder" to Yorimitsu; but she herself remained in her mountain home. So "Little Wonder" went off with the hero Yorimitsu, who named him Sakata Kintoki; and in aftertimes he became famous and illustrious as a warrior, and his deeds are recited to this day. He is the favourite hero of little children, who carry his portrait in their bosom, and wish that they could emulate his bravery and strength.

THE ELVES AND THE ENVIOUS NEIGHBOUR.

ONCE upon a time there was a certain man, who, being overtaken by darkness among the mountains, was driven to seek shelter in the trunk of a hollow tree. In the middle of the night, a large company of elves assembled at the place; and the man, peeping out from his hiding-place, was frightened out of his wits. After a while, however, the elves began to feast and drink wine, and to amuse themselves by singing and dancing, until at last the man, caught by the infection of the fun, forgot all about his fright, and crept out of his hollow tree to join in the revels. When the day was about to dawn, the elves said to the man, "You're a very jolly companion, and must come out and have a dance with us again. You must make us a promise, and keep it." So the elves, thinking to bind the man over to return, took a large wen that grew on his forehead and kept it in pawn; upon this they all left the place, and went home. The man walked off to his own house in high glee at having passed a jovial night, and got rid of his wen into the bargain. So he told the story to all

his friends, who congratulated him warmly on being cured of his wen. But there was a neighbour of his who was also troubled with a wen of long standing, and, when he heard of his friend's luck, he was smitten with envy, and went off to hunt for the hollow tree, in which, when he had found it, he passed the night.

Towards midnight the elves came, as he had expected, and began feasting and drinking, with songs and dances as before. As soon as he saw this, he came out of his hollow tree, and began dancing and singing as his neighbour had done. The elves, mistaking him for their former boon-companion, were delighted to see him, and said—

"You're a good fellow to recollect your promise, and we'll give you back your pledge;" so one of the elves, pulling the pawned wen out of his pocket, stuck it on to the man's forehead, on the top of the other wen which he already had. So the envious neighbour went home weeping, with two wens instead of one. This is a good lesson to people who cannot see the good luck of others, without coveting it for themselves.

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